THE SEXUAL LIFE OF SAVAGES

IN NORTH-WESTERN MELANESIA

An Ethnographic Account of Courtship, Marriage and Family Life among the Natives of the Trobriand Islands, British New Guinea

By

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VOLUME TWO

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THE SEXUAL LIFE OF SAVAGES

"KAYDEBU" DANCE

The circular dance with the carved shield on the baku *of Omarakana. Note the plain, though picturesque, headdress of cockatoo feathers.*

[*Ch. X*, 1; *ch. II*, 2]

CHAPTER X

LOVE-MAKING AND THE PSYCHOLOGY OF EROTIC LIFE

In the course of this inquiry we have been gradually approaching our main interest, and taking an increasingly detailed view of native love-making. At first we merely made a general survey of the social organization and economic activities of the natives, in so far as they affect the relative positions of man and woman in the community. We studied their associations and their diversions, in private and in public, at work and at play, in magical and religious pursuits, as well as in everyday life.

Then coming nearer to our special subject we followed the typical progress of courtship, and found it leading to marriage and parenthood. In the last chapter we described certain customs which enrich and diversify the normal course of courtship.

In this chapter it will be necessary to observe the dalliance of lovers at still closer quarters. We have to learn the nature of their love interest and of the bonds which unite them.

Throughout my exposition, I have always attempted not only to state the norm, but to indicate the exceptions, to trace what might be called the amplitude of deviation, the margin within which people usually try, and sometimes succeed, in circumventing the strict rule. As we

proceed now to the study of more intimate behaviour, the elasticity of the rule becomes greater, and it grows more imperative to give a dynamic description of how a rule or an institution works, rather than how, in native theory, law and morality is supposed or desired to work.

In general, as the ethnographer moves away from the big fundamental, well-defined institutions—such as family, marriage, kinship organization, the clan, exogamy, the rules of courtship—towards the manifold details of personal life, his methods of observation must become more complex and his results less reliable. This cannot be remedied and, for our comfort, it may be remembered that, even in the most exact fields of human thought and experience, a theoretical result can only be verified within certain limits. The most exact of human observations is only approximate, and all that even the chemist or physicist can do is to state the limits within which his error is encompassed. When investigating integral institutions, such as marriage or the family, the ethnographer should, if he be doing competent and intensive field-work, rely on observation rather than on what the native informants tell him. But when dealing with the subtler phases of behaviour, this rule cannot, unfortunately, always be followed. In the study of sexual attraction and the growth of a passion, direct observation is always difficult, and at times impossible, and a great deal of information has to be collected from confidences and gossip.

The ethnographer must be alert to all that happens round him. He must patiently win his way into village life and make such personal friendships as encourage

spontaneous confidences and the repetition of intimate gossip. He must check *ad hoc* statements by remarks dropped in more unguarded moments, explicating the implied and estimating the importance of reservations and reticences. For these are everywhere apt to be more illuminating than direct affirmations, and are especially so among these natives, whose keen sense of delicacy makes the roundabout and allusive way the natural approach to such subjects. It is possible to force them into speaking directly, but this always produces an artificial and false mental attitude, and exclusive reliance on such a method would lead to results which lack entirely the colour of real life.

Thus in the most delicate subjects the ethnographer is bound to a large extent to depend on hearsay. Yet if he resides for a long time among the natives, speaks their language and makes close personal acquaintances, he will be provided with sufficiently useful information. His material will be certainly better than if it had been obtained through the mechanical pumping of informants by the question-and-answer method at so many sticks of tobacco an hour.

Love is a passion to the Melanesian as to the European, and torments mind and body to a greater or lesser extent; it leads to many an *impasse*, scandal, or tragedy; more rarely, it illuminates life and makes the heart expand and overflow with joy. "Out of a full heart the mouth speaketh," and the cold ethnographer must industriously jot down confidences poured out under the stress of strong personal emotion. Also the gossip of those not

directly affected by the event, yet sufficiently interested in it to talk, especially if it be untoward—*puisqu'il y a quelque chose dans les malheurs de nos amis qui ne nous déplait pas*—is scarcely less valuable material for the investigator.

Spontaneous outpourings and village gossip dictated by genuine interest, records of past tragedies, and stories of erotic adventure, have yielded most of the raw material for the descriptions given in this chapter. And the direct knowledge of personal histories and interests made it possible for me to get a true perspective, to look at matters from the native point of view. I was even often able to go behind the explicit statements of the natives, observing, as sometimes happened, that their actions and feelings belied their words, and following up the clue thus given me.

The reader will remember the misadventures of Bagido'u, one of my best friends and informants (see pl. 64, and ch. vi, sec. 1), the animosities and quarrels between Namwana Guya'u and Mitakata (see pl. 3 and ch. i, sec. 2), the boasting Gomaya and his relations to Ilamweria (see pl. 39 and ch. vii, sec. 4). It would have been impossible for me to ascertain the rules of custom and the moral ideas of the natives without the subjective outpourings of these friends of mine.

Side by side with such live material, I naturally always endeavoured to collect objective "documents": records of historical events, samples of tradition, folk-lore and magic. Thus my general impressions, and strong but somewhat vague intuitions, were constantly checked and

PLATE 66

A Melanesian Beauty

[*Ch. X*, 1]

confirmed by data drawn from every sphere of tribal life. In fact, chronologically, the "documents" are usually obtained first, but their real comprehension can be gained only from the knowledge of real life.

The reader interested in methodology will realize that this exposition by cumulative versions—passing from institutions through the general record of a life history to the detailed and intimate analysis which follows—does justice not only to the nature of the material, but also to the manner of its collection.

After this digression on the method of collecting data and of their presentation, let us return once more to a Trobriand village and approach a group of young people playing in the moonlight, in festive mood and dress; let us try to see them as they see each other; follow up their attractions and repulsions. So far we have kept at a discreet distance from the intimate behaviour, the motives and feelings of lovers. More especially we have never attempted to spy upon their passionate caresses. Now we must try to reconstruct the history of a personal intrigue, to understand the first impressions made by beauty and charm, and to follow the development of a passion to its end.

I

EROTIC ATTRACTION

What is it that makes the boys look with entranced attention at one among a group of girls, moving rhythmically in a game or carrying baskets at harvest; or that fascinates the girls in one of the dancers who lead the

ring of swift runners in a *kaydebu* dance? (See pl. 65.) Is it possible for us to find out why a member of either sex is almost universally rejected and why another is sought after; why one category is labelled as plain or unattractive and another as fascinating and beautiful? The European observer soon finds that his standard of personal charm does not essentially differ from that of the natives, when he has once become accustomed to the physical type and to the mannerisms of the Melanesians. Thus, for instance, the girl on plate 66 is universally regarded as a beauty, the one on plate 67 as a plain woman; and with this opinion the reader will not disagree. And yet the latter is a well-built woman and of a pronounced Melanesian type. But it would be perhaps difficult and certainly useless to convey native standards of beauty by means of European phrases and comparisons. Fortunately there are a number of native expressions, descriptions and categories which furnish some sort of objective material, and together with the ethnographer's commentary, may convey a fairly adequate idea of the Trobriander's ideal of beauty.

It must be understood that the problem of erotic charm with which we are now engaged, is different from that discussed in chapter iv, which was concerned with the motives which lead a Trobriand man or woman to enter upon matrimony. In this connection, we found that personal preference, though a powerful inducement to marriage, was only one among others, some social, some economic and some domestic. And even in the matter of personal preference, the erotic motive is not exclusive.

PLATE 67

A Type not Admired by the Natives

[*Ch. X*, 1]

A man or woman of mature age will choose a domestic partner quite different from the paramour who occupied the best part of his or her youth. Marriage is often determined by the attraction of character and personality rather than by sexual adaptation or erotic seduction. This fact, which has been already mentioned, I found confirmed in many concrete cases and in a hundred details. Only in the passing intrigues is simple bodily charm the principal attraction. Let us return then to our imaginary pair and try to find out what it is that they see in each other, as lovers.

When treating of love in fiction or anthropology, it is easier and more pleasant to imagine objects really worthy of admiration. In the Trobriands it would not be difficult to find them, even for one equipped with European taste and Nordic race prejudices; for, within a considerable variety of types, there are to be found men and women with regular delicate features, well-built lithe bodies, clear skins, and that personal charm which predisposes us towards a man, a nationality, or a race.

Verbal descriptions of a racial type are always weak and unconvincing. They may be couched in anthropometric terms and backed by numerical data, but these give little help to the imagination and could only stimulate a physical anthropologist. It is better for the reader to look at pictures, in this book and in other works where the Trobrianders have been described,[1] and to hear what the

[1] As, for instance, in C. G. Seligman, op. cit., and in *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*. For comparative anthropometric data concerning Melanesians and Papuans, cf. "A Classification of the Natives of British New Guinea," *Journ. R. Anthrop. Inst.*, vol. xxxix, 1909, by C. G. Seligman.

natives themselves have to say on the subject of beauty and its opposite.

The natives are never at a loss when asked what elements go to the making of personal beauty in man or woman. The subject is not only interesting to them as to all other human beings, but it is surrounded by a rich folklore and therefore commands an extensive vocabulary. Many of their legends and songs have been specially composed to exalt some famous dancer or singer, and in such texts there are descriptions of ornament and dress, and expressive phrases referring to personal appearance. The charms used in beauty magic give instructive indications of the Trobriander's desires and ideals, as do also the laments for the dead, and descriptions of the blissful life in Tuma, the land of the departed.

But although the renown and tradition of famous beauties is handed down for generations with rich descriptive details, it is difficult for the ethnographer to find a living model for his inquiry. Whenever I asked any of the old, and therefore expert, connoisseurs of beauty whether any living woman could match the radiant divinities drawn from their own and their father's memories, the answer was always in the negative. The Golden Age of real beauty seems to be quite over!

2

REPULSION BY UGLINESS, AGE, AND DISEASE

Let us approach the ideal of beauty by way of its negation, and see what, for the native, makes a person ugly

and repulsive, and therefore impossible from the erotic standpoint. Deformity and disease in mind or body, old age and albinism, all, according to native statements, put a person beyond the pale of erotic interest. The expressions *migila gaga* (his face bad), or *tomigaga* (ugly man, literally man—face—ugly) are frequently in use, and often with the added comment: "No one would sleep with such an one."

Malformations are rare, and I myself cannot recall a single hunchback or congenitally deformed person. Through accident men may lose a limb: *kaykela ipwase* (his leg has rotted away); *yamala ipwase* (his arm has rotted away); but the most frequent congenital defect is that of speech, which the natives describe by the same word, *tonagowa*, as is applied to idiocy and feeble-mindedness.

The bad or repulsive characters of folk-lore are also endowed with bodily deformities or abnormalities. Dokonikan, the most prominent ogre of Kiriwinian folk-lore, has several rows of teeth and cannot speak properly. Women covered with hair and men with disgusting bodies figure in some fairy tales.

As regards disease: sores, ulcers, and skin eruptions are naturally held to be specially repulsive from the viewpoint of erotic contact. Also to be so afflicted is the usual punishment for breaking certain taboos. Indeed, a number of such taboos are only observed by young men, and have no other *raison d'être* than to prevent their skins from being covered with sores. They might be called specific beauty taboos. Thus, it is dangerous to eat fish

which is not quite fresh, or fish which has a very strong flavour. Some kinds of fish are covered with unseemly scales or spots, and these also are forbidden to young men and women. Young people must abstain from yams or fish which have been cut with a sharp instrument. Similar taboos have to be kept by men about to sail on an overseas expedition; they will say that they must only eat "good fish" so that their faces may be beautiful.[1]

The unpleasant disease, tropical ring-worm, covering the skin with perpetually peeling scales, and very prevalent among Melanesians, is said to be a definite drawback, and persons with this disease would not be reckoned among the beauties even if their faces were fine. But it does not seem to form a positive bar to love-making, any more than to other pursuits. On the other hand, this repulsive and contagious affliction is a real inconvenience to the field-worker, who has constantly to deal with afflicted natives and takes a long time to become accustomed to it.

Old age is felt to be a serious handicap in affairs of gallantry. The contrast between repulsive old age and attractive youth is brought out clearly in myth. A hero, who is unsuccessful because of his elderly appearance, becomes rejuvenated and gets everything that he wants. First the marks scored upon him by the hand of time are ruthlessly enumerated: a wrinkled skin, white hair, and toothless jaws. Then the magical change is described: his rounded face, the smooth full lines of his body, his sleek, glossy skin, the thick black hair covering his head,

[1] Cf. *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*, p. 336.

the beautiful black teeth shining between vermilion lips. Now he can win the favours of desirable women, and impose his wishes on men and Fate. Such pictures are drawn in two of the chief myths of the *kula* (the ceremonial exchange), which plays such a great part in tribal life, and shows so many psychological affinities to their erotic interests. Similar pictures are also to be found in the myth of rejuvenation, in the ideas of the natives concerning a future life, and in one or two fairy tales.[1]

Obesity is extremely rare, and in its more pronounced forms is classed as a disease. Baldness is not infrequent. It is considered a blemish, and a certain amount of criticism is contained in the word *tokulubakana* (bald man, literally man-occiput empty-space). To a Kiriwinian, however, it is not so fatal as it is to his European contemporary, for wigs are still used in that happy island (pl. 68). Either a narrow band of hair is tied just above the forehead—a sort of fuzzy wreath—or a wig covering the whole head is worn. The wig is made by sewing tufts of hair on to a skull cap made of plaited fibre or string. The hair is easily obtained, for mourning customs demand that every member of the afflicted community, with the exception of the deceased's clansmen, shall shave off his beautiful mop of hair.

Cutting off the hair is not the only mourning custom which aims at the reduction of personal charm. The transformation in appearance imposed by mourning embodies, to a certain extent, the native idea of what is ugly.

[1] For the *kula* myth cf. *Argonauts*, pp. 307-10 and 322-4, and *Myth in Primitive Psychology*, 1926.

The shaven head, the body blackened with a thick layer of mixed grease and charcoal, colourless and purposely soiled dress, no ornaments and no scents—these are the outward signs of bereavement. The transformation undergone by a woman in mourning is shown in the frontispiece, where two girls, equally pretty under normal conditions, can be contrasted. In fact, the idea that the chief mourner, especially the widow, should be made ugly so that she may not attract other men, is explicitly stated by natives, and is also implied in the whole scheme of mortuary proceedings, apart from the alteration in appearance (see ch. vi).

The essential conditions of personal charm are now obvious; normal bodily build, health, absence of mental and functional disorders, strong growth of hair, sound teeth, and a smooth skin—all signs of vigour and of a good constitution.

But an important caution must here be entered. Natives speak with such horror about the various forms of ugliness, and repulsion is so clearly discernible in their behaviour that there is no temptation to doubt their word. In fact, in games and amusements, an albino, an idiot, or a man afflicted with skin disease is so completely left out of the fun that his loneliness and isolation wake pity even in the frigid heart of an ethnographer. Thus observation fully confirmed the verbal proposition in which all the natives are agreed, that all such people are absolutely debarred from sexual intercourse and that they have to resort to solitary means of satisfaction. Nevertheless, I began to doubt its validity, when, in the course

of my field-work, this very proposition was adduced as proof, with many illustrative examples, that a woman can have children without sexual intercourse (see ch. vii, 3 and 4). Tilapo'i (to quote cases already mentioned) had one child, Kurayana as many as six; while a few albino girls have been blessed with numerous offspring; yet: "No man would approach them, they are so repulsive" was made the major premise of the syllogism—though many of my informants must have known better!

The more thorough research which followed my realization of this discrepancy revealed the astonishing fact that strong and, no doubt, genuine physical repulsion does not prevent a Melanesian from the sexual act. This probably has some connection with their manner of carrying out this physiological activity. I was able to ascertain that the ugliest and most repulsive people have, not only sporadic, but regular intercourse. Orato'u, a *tonagowa*—meaning in this case, not an idiot but one afflicted with defective speech and a repulsively deformed face—can always obtain favours from the village beauties of Omarakana, the residence of the paramount chief, whose henchman he is and whose wives he is said to know intimately enough. The albino seen on pl. 38 has had several notorious love affairs. In most of the villages where I worked I could mention a few old and thoroughly repulsive women who were able, especially if they or their husbands were of high rank, to obtain young and attractive boys as lovers.

When I discussed this with my friend, the late Billy Hancock of Gusaweta—a trader of exceptional intelli-

gence and one of the finest men I have known—he told me that he had long ago arrived at the same conclusion independently, and quoted from memory a number of striking instances, in some of which the women were repugnant, as he said, "far beyond the toleration of a drunken sailor." He also mentioned the experience of a medical officer, especially appointed in the Trobriands for the treatment of venereal disease. This official was once baffled by finding all the boys in a community afflicted with very virulent and obviously recent gonorrhea, while all the women to be considered in this connection were as yet quite healthy. Finally he obtained a confession from one of his patients that he and his companions had copulated among others with a woman so old, decrepit, and ugly, that the medical officer had thankfully and unhesitatingly omitted her in his several inspections. It was found that she was the source of infection, and that she had for a long time been active in persuading boys to copulation. The boys, on discovery, tried to belittle the fact and to present the whole matter as a joke, but they were in reality rather mortified. The attitude of my informants when I confronted them with such and similar facts was also "ambivalent." They had to admit that some people will copulate with repulsive women, but they treated it simply as the sign that such people are of unsound mind.

This was one more of the several cases in which I found how strongly convention (ideals of behaviour) obsesses the mind of the natives, but only on the surface and controlling their statements rather than their behaviour.

Things about which he would not like even to speak, much less admit to having done, a native simply denies with consistency and vigour, although he is perfectly aware that they do happen, perhaps even under his own roof. *Tout comme chez nous!*

3

BEAUTY OF THE HUMAN FACE AND BODY

Vigour, vitality, and strength, a well-proportioned body, a smooth and properly pigmented, but not too dark skin are the basis of physical beauty for the native. In all the phases of village life I have seen admiration drawn and held by a graceful, agile and well-balanced person. The same generalization can be inductively drawn from what we shall say here of the native canons of perfection in form and colour, bodily smell, quality of voice, and grace of movement.

Since the natives have an extended view of each other's bodies, there is no artificial barrier to their æsthetic interest in them; nor are the various elements in erotic fascination placed in the false perspective which makes our full European clothing the instrument of artificial modesty as well as of disguised allurement, so that an estimation of erotic values is difficult and complex, and is based on fashions in dress as well as on the appreciation of physical beauty. With this advantage over us, it is a notable fact that their main erotic interest is focussed on the human head and face. In the formulæ of beauty magic, in the vocabulary of human attractions, as well as in the ar-

senal of ornament and decoration, the human face—eyes, mouth, nose, teeth, and hair—takes precedence. It must be observed that the head plays an important part in magic as an object for admiration, and not as the seat of the erotic emotions, for these are placed in the lower part of the belly. For the rest of the body, the breasts in the woman and build and size in the man are most important, with the colour and the quality of their skins. In certain magical formulæ, all the limbs and portions of the human torso are enumerated, besides the features of the face and head. In others, however, only the latter are mentioned.

The outline of the face is very important; it should be full and well rounded. The phrases *imiliyapila* (like the full moon); *imilibwata* (like the round moon); *kalububovatu* (its roundness), appear frequently in magical formulæ. The forehead must be small and smooth. The word *talisalisa* (to smooth) recurs in beauty charms. Full cheeks, a chin neither protruding nor too small, a complete absence of hair on the face, but the scalp hair descending well on to the forehead, are all *desiderata* of beauty.

Cosmetics are used on the face more than on any other part of the body. Facial painting (*soba*) is done in black, red, and white (pl. 76). For the red, either a compound of betel-nut and lime is used or red ochre. Certain forms of clay, sometimes mixed with crushed coral, were formerly used to produce white; but nowadays European white lead has taken the place of this, though red is still usually made with native pigments. Black can be put on, either with simple charred coco-nut fibre or some other

form of charcoal, or else with a mixture of this and an aromatic oil, prepared by cutting aromatic wood into small pieces and boiling it in coco-nut oil. The wood preferred in this preparation is called *sayaku*, and it is, I think, sandal wood imported from the eastern islands (Woodlark and Marshall Bennett). A similar though less appreciated wood, *kadikoko*, is found in the Trobriands and can be used for the same purpose. The strongly scented mixture is kept in coco-nut oil bottles and used for the tracing of fine lines on the face. The natives make a clear distinction between decorative painting (*soba*), which enhances their beauty, and smothering themselves in soot (*koulo*) in order to extinguish all their attractions in sign of mourning.

Having indicated the general character of facial beauty, let us proceed to the details. The eyes, as we know, are to the natives the gateways of erotic desire (ch. vii, 1); they are also, in themselves, a centre of erotic interest. Biting off the eyelashes, the custom of *mitakuku* as it is called, plays an important part in love-making. The expression *agu mitakuku* ("my bitten-off eyelashes") is a term of endearment. The eyes are frequently referred to in the magic of beauty: *mitayari* (shining eyes); *mitubwoyili* (lovely eyes); *mitapwa'i* (bright eyes). Eyes should be shining, but they should be small. On this point the natives are quite decided. Large eyes, *puynapuyna*, are ugly. There is no special beauty treatment for the eyes, except, of course, shaving the eyebrows which, together with the biting off of eyelashes, leaves them singularly naked to European taste. Neither is any

magic specifically devoted to their lustre and other charms.

Next to the eyes, the mouth is, perhaps, the most important feature. It plays a conspicuous part in love-making, and its beauty is highly esteemed in native æsthetics. It should be very full, but well cut. Protruding lips (*ka'uvala'u wadola*) are considered as unattractive as pinched or thin ones (*kaywoya wadola*). Very ugly, I was told, is a hanging lower lip. There is a special magic of beauty associated with the mouth. It is the magic of *talo*, the red paint made of betel-nut, which is used to redden the lips.

The nose should be full and fleshy, but not too large. A nose, which the natives call *kapatata*, that is long, narrow and sharp, in short aquiline, is ugly. A beautiful nose is called *kabulitoto* (standing-up nose), for too flat a one is also a serious blemish, and men or women so handicapped are called *tonapa'i* or *nanapa'i* according to sex. A nose-stick used to be considered æsthetically indispensable, but it is now gradually going out of fashion, and there is no magic associated with this ornament or its organ.

The ears must be neither too small nor too large—a safe rule to follow for all parts of the body, whether in the Trobriands or elsewhere. Ears that stand out from the head (*tiginaya*) are distinctly ugly. Every ear must be pierced at the lobe and ornamented with ear-rings. The hole is made early in childhood by placing on the ear a turtle shell ring which has been cut and the ends sharpened, so that the points gradually work their way through the gristle. The resultant small hole is then

gradually enlarged until a considerable opening surrounded by a pendulous ring is formed in the lobe. This is filled with ear-rings of turtle shell and other ornaments, especially red discs made of spondylus shell. Such treatment of the ear is *de rigueur;* otherwise a man or woman would be said to have *tegibwalodila* (ears like a bush pig).

Teeth, in order to be really attractive, have to be blackened (*kudubwa'u:* literally black teeth, or *gigiremutu:* an expression for the process). This blackening is done by placing a piece of a special mangrove root against the teeth overnight and repeating the process over a long period. The majority of the Trobrianders do not, however, blacken their teeth.

Hair in its proper place is considered a great beauty, but, as we know, it must not be allowed to grow anywhere except on the scalp. Eyebrows are shaved off, the beard is never allowed to grow except by old men "who do not wish to have anything to do with women." Hair is never pulled out; it is always shaved, in the old days with obsidian, at present with bottle glass. The hair on the head is admired when it is very full, and then it is allowed to grow into a thick mop of which almost every hair radiates from the scalp, in the manner so characteristic of Melanesia.

The natives distinguish black, light and grey hair (*yabwabwa'u, yadidaydaya* and *yasoso'u*). The albino is called *topwaka'u,* "man with white hair," or *tososo'u,* "man with grey hair." They further classify it as straight-to-wavy (*yasinare'i* or *yasisiye'i*); curly (*yasusay-*

bulu); thick and moppy (*yamtumwatu*); tangled and almost matted (*yakulupaki* or *yatutuya*). The two middle qualities are considered beautiful; but the straight-to-wavy and the matted kinds are not. As to the trimming and dressing of it, the really typical Melanesian mop, *gugwapo'u*, is the favourite mode. When it is cut round the sides and back and left long on top, giving the head an elongated cylindrical form, it is called *bobobu*. Sometimes when a man comes out of mourning, the hair is allowed to grow in the middle of the head, while the edges are kept shaved; this is called *takwadoya*. Hair which is growing after mourning is called *sayva'u* while it is still short. Persons of rank in mourning have the privilege of leaving some hair at the back of the head near the nape of the neck (pl. 25). This grows into long strands which are plaited sometimes and are called *saysuya* (literally, "ringlets").

Body hair (*unu'unu*—a word also given to the growth on yam tubers, on the backs of leaves and so forth) is regarded as ugly and is kept shaven. Only in myth and in fairy tale do certain people appear who are covered with *unu'unu;* to the natives a grotesque and at the same time a perverse characteristic.

Hair dressing plays a great part in the personal toilet. Trimming is done by means of a sharpened mussel shell (*kaniku*) and the hair is cut off in tufts against a piece of wood. It is combed or teased with a long-pronged wooden comb (*sinata*); and one of the most important types of beauty magic is done over the comb. We have seen that teasing out the hair (*pulupulu, waypulu* or

waynoku) is the centre of certain festivals (*kayasa*), which are really organized solely for the display of this beauty. Nails are cut and trimmed with sharpened mussel shell.

A slim, straight, tall body is much admired in a man. *Kaysaki*, like a "swift long canoe," *kuytubo*, like a rounded tree, are both terms of praise, of which the latter shows that emaciation is not an asset. *Kaylobu*—well adorned, well trimmed—expresses the same idea. All three words occur in the lament of a widow for her young husband.

In women, also, a slim body without excessive abdominal development is considered desirable. *Kaygumita* (slim), *nasasaka* (small-bellied), are words of praise. *Napopoma* (pot-bellied), *nasoka* (with the body like a globe-fish), on the contrary, express disapproval.

A woman's breasts are of special importance. The same word *nunu* is used to describe the female breast, the nipple in man or woman, the central portion of the male chest, and milk. There are a number of partly metaphorical, partly specific expressions to describe the æsthetic appearance of the female breasts. *Nutaviya* (like the *taviya*, a small round fruit) describes a full, round, firm formation; and *nupiyakwa*, a word the etymology of which I was unable to trace, has the same connotation. *Nupipisiga* or *nupisiga* is applied to small, undeveloped, girlish breasts, which are considered less attractive than the first category. For flabby breasts the word *nusawewo* is used, a compound of the specific prefix *nu* and the word *sawewo*, to hang limply down, as, for instance, a ripe fruit hangs. Another apt simile is con-

tained in the word *nukaybwibwi,* in which long, thin, pendent breasts are compared to the aerial roots of the pandanus tree. Breasts wrinkled and flabby with age are called *pwanunu,* the prefix *pwa* meaning deterioration and *nunu* being the specific noun. The meaning of this word has become extended to describe wrinkled skin in general.

Firm, well-developed breasts are admirable in a woman. Adolescent girls massage (*i'uwoli*) their breasts, which then may also be called *nu'ulawolu* (literally, massaged breasts). When a lover prefers his girl with small breasts, he will say, *yoku tage kuwoli nunum; kwunupisiga* ("Do not thou massage thy breasts, remain with girlish breasts").

To return to physical beauty in general, it has already been mentioned that smoothness of skin and a full brown colour are much sought after. In magical formulæ, smooth objects with a pleasant surface are often mentioned in this connection: fish without scales, trees with smooth bark, smooth, rounded shells. As to the colour, dark brown is decidedly a disadvantage. In the magic of washing and in other beauty formulæ, a desirable skin is compared with white flowers, moonlight, and the morning star. Pregnancy magic has already given us an example of this ideal of bodily perfection. But deficient pigmentation is not admired; and the insipid, pale yellowish brown which is sometimes found, is as unpleasant to the Trobriander as to the European. Albinos, with their flaxen hair and long golden body fluff, their enormous

freckles, as if something dirty and brown had been splashed over them, produce an unpleasant impression on European and native alike (pl. 38).

4

THE CARE OF THE BODY

The main care of the body is directed to cleanliness. The natives have an extreme sensitiveness to smell and to bodily dirt. *Kakaya* (bathing, or washing all over with plenty of water) is the first act in all ceremonial ornamentation, and is a frequent one at other times. The natives often rinse their hands and wash their faces, such minor ablutions being called *wini.* Washing before a grand toilet is always followed by anointing (*putuma*) with coco-nut oil, which gives a fine lustre to the skin and is also a strong and lasting deodorizer. If possible, some perfume is added to the oil: pandanus flower, *gayawo,* the aromatic *butia* blossom, and other scented flowers and herbs according to the season, are used for this purpose; as is the aromatic paint, *sayaku,* which has already been mentioned.

Dried and bleached leaves are the material for native dress, the men using the pandanus—or, to produce a garment of a finer quality, the areca palm—and the women, banana leaves (see pl. 69). Their dress is of the slightest, especially for men, who only wear a pubic leaf. This is a narrow band which covers the pubic regions, the lower part of the abdomen, and the back up to the first

lumbar vertebræ. The band is attached, front and back, to a belt. Usually above this support the man wears another ornamental belt, made sometimes of valuable material. The pubic leaf is very carefully adjusted, so that the limited area which modesty demands should be hidden remains always precisely and carefully covered. Men very seldom take off their pubic leaf, except in the intimacy of their sleeping place. Only when fishing or bathing with other men is it removed. The word *yavi-* (pubic leaf) takes the same suffixed possessive pronouns as are only otherwise used with parts of the human body (*yavigu*, my leaf; *yavim*, thy leaf; *yavila*, his leaf; and so on). This gives a grammatical expression to the intimate union of this garment with the male body.

Women wear skirts made of narrow strips of vegetable fibre, variously prepared and coloured. A full description of the technology of Trobriand "models" and of feminine psychology in the always important matter of dress would lead to a voluminous dissertation. To be brief: women wear an underskirt and a top skirt. At home and among intimate friends and when at work, the top skirt is taken off, and only the petticoat remains (see pls. 9, 18, 21). This is usually shabby and always scanty; but it adequately fulfils all the demands of modesty. The overskirts are full and sometimes very thick. At ordinary seasons and for ordinary purposes they are not artificially stained and show only their natural rich gold-and-silver colour of dried coco-nut or banana leaf. In times of mourning and during menstruation, slightly longer skirts are worn. For bathing or during rain, coco-

ETHNOGRAPHER WITH A MAN IN A WIG

The Ethnographer talking to Togugu'a, a sorcerer of some repute and a good informant, who is wearing a full wig and holding a large lime gourd and spatula. From this photograph a critical reader can assess the truth of the statement discussed in Section 4 (native comparison between European and Melanesian features).

[Ch. X, 2 and 4]

THE LEAF AND THE DRESS

Man and Woman, each holding the palm leaf from which their respective garments are made.

[*See also Pl.* 9; *ch. X*, 4; *ch. I*, 4]

nut fibre is preferred to other materials. The greatest variety of colour and form is seen in the gala skirts worn during harvest and at festivities (pls. 13, 61, 69). These display radiant combinations of colour, all the range of materials available and great ingenuity in "cut." The word for the female garment is *doba*, also used with affixes of nearest possession. In its compound form it changes some of its vowels, as *dabegu*, my skirt, *dabem*, *dabela*, and so forth.

The more important ornaments have already been mentioned incidentally. The natives adorn themselves with wreaths of aromatic blossom; put flowers, especially the red hibiscus, in their hair, and aromatic herbs or long leaves and streamers into their armlets. Necklaces of shell and wild banana seed are worn, and armlets on the upper arm. All men and women wear ear-rings and belts.

The body, as distinguished from the face, is very seldom painted, and no tattoo markings are ever visible. I am told that girls at the time of their first menstruation are tattooed round the vagina. This tattooing is called *ki'uki'u*, and is done, according to my informants, for æsthetic purposes. Also men and women burn marks on their forearms, as an adornment.

One more personal charm must be mentioned—the voice. The good singer is only second in renown to the good dancer. The power of a beautiful voice is known and praised far and wide, and many instances of seduction by song are quoted. Perhaps the most notorious is

that of Mokadayu, whose success with the fair sex culminated in an incestuous liaison with his own sister, one of the most beautiful girls in the village.[1]

As a background to Trobriand ideals of beauty, it may be interesting to hear the natives' comments on other racial types. Though other natives are generally considered less attractive than one's own tribe, distinctions are made and degrees of ugliness gradated. The pure Papuan type from the Papuan Gulf and from the northern coast, who are now frequently seen in the Trobriands with white men, are undoubtedly classed as the least attractive. Their ugliness is chiefly ascribed to their dark skin; it is, in fact, much darker than the Trobriander's, and has a characteristic chocolate tinge. Their pronouncedly frizzy hair and their strange manner of dressing it in plaits and fringes is also regarded as very unbecoming. Unattractive, too, are their prominent thin lips and their large, aquiline, almost Jewish noses, set in a long narrow face. These criticisms were made to me on the occasion of a series of dances performed by Papuan Gulf natives who had been employed on one of the plantations. Their dancing was genuinely admired, but not their physical appearance. The Dobuans with their dark skin, their thick-set build, and their short necks, are often made fun of by the Trobrianders. The more distant natives from the Eastern Archipelagos, the Southern Massim, receive much higher marks for beauty. In spite of the fact that they are more distant strangers to the Trobrianders than

[1] Compare *Sex and Repression*, 1927, part ii, ch. iv, and ch. xiv, 3, of this work, where the story of Mokadayu is given.

are the Dobuans, the natives realize that they are racially akin and say: "They are like us, fine-looking."

Europeans, the natives frankly say, are not good-looking. The straight hair "coming round the heads of women like threads of *im*" (coarse pandanus fibre used for making strings); the nose, "sharp like an axe blade"; the thin lips; the big eyes, "like water puddles"; the white skin with spots on it like those of an albino—all these the natives say (and no doubt feel) are ugly. It is only fair to observe, in justice to their good manners and personal urbanity, that they were quick to add that the ethnographer was a meritorious exception to the rule. They always told me that I looked much more like a Melanesian than like an ordinary white man. They even fortified this compliment by specific documentation: thick lips, small eyes, absence of any sharp outline in the nose, were credited to me as assets. The only points on which they were discreet and honest enough not to compliment me were my forehead and my hair. I am afraid, however, that the Trobrianders are more polite than truthful, and it must be remembered that personal praise is by right of custom always repaid with a suitable gift of tobacco or betel-nut, which, rather than æsthetic conviction, may have been the motive of the compliment (see, however, pl. 68).

It is clear, then, that the Trobrianders prefer their own racial type, and that this is not mere parochial conceit, since they make reasoned distinctions between other types and give praise where it is due. Thus the Southern Massim they regard as their equals; and are even ready

to admit that the Eastern portion of the Northern Massim, the natives of Woodlark Island and the Marshall Bennett group, are their superiors in personal appearance. I may add that, in common with all strangers, I was less susceptible at first to individual differences and more impressed by the general type. But with greater familiarity, I also came to feel that too dark or too yellow a skin, too straight or too frizzy hair, a mouth as thin as that of a European, and an aquiline nose were features unpleasant in a Melanesian. At the same time I became able to appreciate beauty within the racial type and *de facto* always knew more or less who would be attractive to a native, and who not. Even the artificial transformations—shiny black teeth in thick vermilion lips, graceful scrolls painted in three colours over the face, flaming hibiscus blossoms in the thick black mop of hair, golden brown skins, glossy with coco-nut oil—ceased to impress me as mere grotesque masquerade, and I saw them as becoming adjuvants to personal beauty. After all, it takes us some time to become accustomed to the changing fashions of our own race and to detect beauty where at first we were only able to see caricature.

I still remember the feeling of slight surprise at the formula of beauty with which the old chief To'uluwa started my first discussion of the subject:

"*Migila*	*bubowatu; matala*			*kuvikekita;*	
"Face his (hers)	rounded;	eye his (hers)		small;	
kabulula	*kaykekita; kudula*				*sene*
nose his (hers)	small;	tooth his (hers)			very

kobwabwa'u;	*kulula*	*sene*	*kobubowatu."*
blackened;	hair his (hers)	very	rounded off."

This terse sentence roughly summarizes the results of our study, and gives an approximate standard of personal beauty. It presents a blend of cultural values, biological impulses and racial preferences. The point of view can be understood by a European; that is, if he can maintain the feeling of human or biological solidarity across racial and cultural differences, and a sufficient mental plasticity to become thoroughly familiar with the cultural and æsthetic standards of another people.

5

THE COURSE OF AN INTRIGUE

To understand the effect of personal charm on the native, it may be helpful to present a typical Trobriand love affair against the background of Western romance.

Love is precipitated with them, as with us, by the first shock received from beauty and personality; but a world of customary and cultural differences divides the after-effects of this. The initial barriers preventing a rapid sexual intimacy between two people in love, which are so characteristic of all higher civilizations, for us endow the beloved with inestimable virtues and enclose him or her in an aura of holy and mysterious desirability. In men whose creative imagination is developed beyond their practical sense of the realities, such passionate attachments may lead simply to day-dreaming and excessive shyness

in the romantic relation, or to such outpourings as we find in *Vita Nuova* or Petrarch's Sonnets. This shy, self-centred adoration, this extreme creative exaltation of the eternal-feminine—of the Beatrice or Gretchen leading man into the presence of God—is a real type of Western romance, standardized in some of the highest works of art, but existing also in many not gifted with the power of self-expression. The reaction against this same artificially fostered mystery and the consequent idealization of woman, is seen with opposite results in the invective and indictment of Schopenhauer and Nietzsche.

The man in the street, who sustains the same shock, does not write sonnets, but none the less he surrounds the object of his serious affection with a more temperate exaltation and worship. At the same time his emotion finds practical expression, and he seeks every opportunity for closer acquaintance. If liking ripens into mutual love, the affair will follow the customary course of courtship, engagement, and marriage. A man and woman may be driven by natural passion to the final consummation, athwart all social or moral rules, but it is none the less true that real love leads men and women of our culture, not to the direct satisfaction of the sexual urge, but to a gradual blending of sensuous elements with the general spiritual attraction. Personal intimacy in a full common life, legally sanctioned, is the direct goal of our romantic ideology, and the rest, including sexual relations, follows as a tacit implication.

Let us turn to an average Melanesian youth attracted by a girl who is not put beyond his reach by the taboos

of kinship, social standing, or too great a difference in personal charm. In him, also, the first impression produces an æsthetic and sensuous reaction which transforms its cause into something desirable, valuable, and worthy of strenuous effort. But the feeling of mystery, the desire to worship at a distance or merely to be admitted into her presence, is not there. The Trobriand boy has had many sexual experiences with girls of the same type as his new ideal; and, from childhood, the attraction of beauty and direct erotic approach have been intimately associated in his experience. He has not to stumble upon the final fulfilment of erotic desire, he immediately anticipates it. All the customs, arrangements, and codes of behaviour dictate simple, direct approach, as we shall see in the following description.

An interesting sidelight is thrown upon Trobriand courtship by the customs in other Melanesian communities, where sexual freedom is much more restricted, and where the gradual approach and something of romantic love exist. In the nearest ethnographic region to the south, the Amphletts, and in the next one to this, which is inhabited by the Dobuan tribe, prenuptial intercourse is regarded as reprehensible, and custom does not encourage the free mixing of children in erotic games nor open untrammelled intercourse between boys and girls, nor institutions such as the *bukumatula* (bachelors' and girls' house). From a limited experience in the Amphletts, I received the impression that prenuptial intercourse hardly exists at all, and in Dobu it is certainly much more restricted than in the Trobriands. Correlated with

this, we find a number of arrangements which allow of a prolonged courtship and which are symptomatic of a love not specifically directed towards sexual intercourse. I was told that both districts have love songs and that the boys court by playing on pan-pipes or on a jew's-harp; also that boys and girls meet at games and in amusements for the sake of personal acquaintance and social intercourse only. During the later stages of courtship and before marriage, a boy is allowed to visit his betrothed at her parents' house, but there is no cohabitation, and only conversation and caresses pass between them. A similar state of affairs exists with the Western Papuo-Melanesian tribes, among several of whom I conducted more or less prolonged investigations. These data, however, I submit with caution, and they are in no way comparable to my observations among the Trobrianders. They are based entirely on statements obtained from informants *ad hoc*, and not on the spontaneous material which comes to hand with long residence in a country.[1]

The love-sick Trobriander, however, taught by custom to be direct in amorous pursuits, proceeds at once to the approved methods of approach.

The simplest of these is direct personal solicitation. From previous descriptions of sexual licence, we know that there are numerous opportunities for a boy to express his desire, or for a girl to induce him to do so (see ch. ix). This is perfectly easy within the same village community.

[1] With regard to the Western Papuo-Melanesians, see my monograph on "The Natives of Mailu," in *Transactions of the Royal Society of South Australia*, 1915, pp. 559-64, and the references there given to Professor Seligman, op. cit.

When the two belong to different villages, certain festivals bring them together; they can speak to each other, and indulge in the preliminaries of love during games and dances, and in crowds; also they can arrange a future meeting. After that, by the *ulatile* and *katuyausi* customs, the meetings can be repeated, or one of the lovers may move to the other's village.

Another method is that of solicitation by an intermediary (*kaykivi*). This is used when the two communities are distant and, owing to the season, no personal approach is possible. A mutual friend, male or female, is begged to express the boy's admiration and to arrange for a rendezvous. The *kaykivi* is not, as a rule, lightly set in motion, for its failure, if this becomes public, draws down considerable ridicule on the solicitor. But if direct approach and the *kaykivi* are both for some reason impossible, the lover uses the most powerful way of wooing, that of magic, as the first step in his attack. It is sufficient to say in this place that almost all final success in love is attributed to magic, that both men and women believe in it deeply and trust it completely, and that, because of this psychological attitude, it is very efficacious. But a full account of love magic will be given in the following chapter.

Thus there is nothing roundabout in a Trobriand wooing; nor do they seek full personal relations, with sexual possession only as a consequence. Simply and directly a meeting is asked for with the avowed intention of sexual gratification. If the invitation is accepted, the satisfaction of the boy's desire eliminates the romantic frame of mind,

the craving for the unattainable and mysterious. If he is rejected, there is not much room for personal tragedy, for he is accustomed from childhood to having his sexual impulses thwarted by some girls, and he knows that another intrigue cures this type of ill surely and swiftly.

6

CASES OF PERSONAL ATTACHMENT

Though the social code does not favour romance, romantic elements and imaginative personal attachments are not altogether absent in Trobriand courtship and marriage. This will become clear if we review the three phases of the love life of an individual discussed in chapter iii. In the easy erotic play of children, sympathies and antipathies arise, and personal preferences declare themselves. Such early sympathetic attractions sometimes strike quite deep. From several of my friends I learned that their marriage had its roots in a childish affection. Tokulubakiki and his wife knew and liked one another as children. Toyodala, whom I saw in despair after his wife's death, had been a friend of hers in childhood (see ch. vi, sec. 4). Similar conclusions can be drawn from observation of children and stories of their behaviour. In a small way they try to win, to impress, and to catch the imagination of their playmates. Thus even at this stage some elements of romance are mixed with the direct sexuality of their playing.

At the second stage, when boys and girls amuse themselves freely with love-making, personal preferences are

even more pronounced. They change frequently, but their imagination and feelings are unquestionably engaged for the time being. It is not difficult to overhear boys discussing the beautiful girls by whom they are attracted. One boy will praise his fancy while another disputes her supremacy; and, in this argument, the amorous yearnings of each will find expression.

As to concrete instances, it was rather difficult for me to collect any circumstantial data about either children or adolescent boys or girls. But at the later stage, where attraction ripens into desire for marriage and matters are treated much more seriously, I had several opportunities for observation. The case of Mekala'i, a boy temporarily in my service, has already been mentioned (see ch. iv, sec. 2). He was seriously in love with Bodulela, of whom it was notorious that she slept with her stepfather. The boy was very deeply attached to her, and though there was no chance for him to possess her in the immediate future, and he was not even allowed to visit her, for months he nourished hopes and plans for ultimately winning her. He was also obviously concerned to appear before her as a man of importance and influence. Another boy, Monakewo, had a liaison with Dabugera, who belonged to the highest rank. He often bewailed his low rank, which he knew would prevent his marriage with her (see ch. iv, sec. 1). This disability he tried to write off by personal achievement. He boasted of his fine voice, his skill in dancing, his many abilities—some of which really existed—and how Dabugera valued these. When for a few days she was unfaithful to him, he would be

evidently mortified; and on each of these occasions he wanted to persuade me to sail away from the island and take him with me, at the same time dwelling in imagination on how greatly she would be impressed by this decisive step, and on the fine presents he would bring back to her.

There are also cases on record where a man wants to marry a girl, does not at first succeed, but after a long period of yearning, wins his first choice. Sayabiya, a rather good-looking girl, had a lover from her own village, Yalaka, whom she was going to marry. Tomeda, a handsome man from Kasana'i, famous for his strength, his efficiency in gardening and his skill in dancing, made an impression on her and finally persuaded her to marry him. On my first visit to the Trobriands, I used to see a great deal of both of them, and found her one of the really attractive women, and him a very good informant. When I returned, two years later, he was living alone, for she had gone back to her former lover and married him (see ch. v, sec. 1). Magic, of course, was blamed, but unquestionably it was a return to the first love. My friend Tomeda was extremely depressed for a long time, and used often to speak to me about his lost lady with obvious longing. I left the district and did not see him for some six months, but a few days before sailing from the Trobriands I met him, painted and adorned on his way to another village—obviously in the rôle of a hopeful suitor, a *to'ulatile*. When I chaffed him, he confessed smiling that he had a new girl whom he was hoping to marry soon.

Another tangled amour was that of Yobukwa'u, a son of the chief To'uluwa (see ch. iv, sec. 1, and ch. v, sec. 5). His sweetheart, Ilaka'isi, was married, for reasons of state, to his father, as the youngest of some twenty-four wives. After this the young man took another girl, Isepuna, whom he meant to marry. But he was unable to withstand the proximity of his former sweetheart, and it became notorious throughout Omarakana, the chief's residence, that he slept regularly with his father's youngest wife. This deeply offended his betrothed. At the same time Yobukwa'u's younger brother, Kalogusa, returned from a year's service on an overseas plantation. He was struck by his elder brother's betrothed, Isepuna, and an attachment sprang up between them. The situation was very difficult, for it is an extremely bad thing to take away a brother's betrothed from him. But love was stronger than moral considerations. Isepuna broke with Yobukwa'u and became engaged to Kalogusa. They were married a few months after my arrival in Omarakana. It may be added that in the meantime, Yobukwa'u married a very unattractive girl, Losa, but gossip has it that he and Ilaka'isi are still lovers.

Almost identical was the story of Gilayviyaka, an elder brother of Yobukwa'u (see ch. v, sec. 5). He also had slept with Nabwoyuma before her marriage to his father. Subsequently he married Bulubwaloga, a really attractive lightly pigmented brown-haired woman from Yalumugwa, to whom he was deeply attached. This, however, did not prevent his nightly visits to Nabwoyuma. His wife did not relish these, and spied on him; and he

was caught one night *in flagrante delicto*, with the result that a very big public scandal quite overwhelmed him. He had to leave the village for some time, and his wife returned to her people. During my stay in the village, a couple of years after the event, he made several attempts to get his wife back, and was obviously feeling his loss keenly. On my last return to the Trobriands, I learned that he had signed on as a plantation hand, come home after a year, and died a few months before my arrival. The hopeless attachment of Ulo Kadala has already been mentioned (ch. iv, sec. 1). One case at least of suicide because of an unhappy love affair has been given to me by the natives.[1]

In these examples we find elements of what we ourselves mean by love: imagination and an attempt to woo the heart through the imagination rather than by a direct appeal to the senses; steadfast preference, and repeated attempts at possession. In many of them, there is a pronounced appreciation of the personality loved and of its power to enrich life or leave it empty. These elements certainly appear in unfamiliar combinations and in a perspective strange to us. The attitude to sex is different, and therefore certain characteristic elements of the Western sentiment are absent. A platonic attachment would be impossible. Above all most of the personal initiative in wooing is replaced to a considerable extent by the practice of magic. Such generalizations can only be approximate, but the facts given in this chapter and incidentally throughout the book, will enable the careful

[1] Cf. *Crime and Custom*, p. 95.

reader to gauge the differences between love and love-making in the Trobriands and in our culture.

7

THE COMMERCIAL ASPECT OF LOVE

There is an interesting side to Trobriand love that might either escape the attention of the superficial observer, or give rise to many misunderstandings. In the course of every love affair the man has constantly to give small presents to the woman. To the natives the need of one-sided payment is self-evident. This custom implies that sexual intercourse, even where there is mutual attachment, is a service rendered by the female to the male. As such it has to be repaid in accordance with the rule of reciprocity or give-and-take, which pervades tribal life, so that every gift, every service and every favour must be paid by something of equivalent value. The reward for sexual favours is called *buwa,* and the word is used with the suffix of nearest possession (*buwagu, buwam, buwala,* etc.). This is perhaps merely a grammatical archaism. If not, it expresses an extremely close relation between the gift and both the giver and the receiver: in other words, that the gift is an essential part of the transaction, as indeed it is.

This rule is by no means logical or self-evident. Considering the great freedom of women and their equality with men in all matters, especially that of sex, considering also that the natives fully realize that women are as inclined to intercourse as men, one would expect the sexual

relation to be regarded as an exchange of services in itself reciprocal. But custom, arbitrary and inconsequent here as elsewhere, decrees that it is a service from women to men, and men have to pay.

As to the size and nature of the gift, this varies with the type of sexual relationship. As we have seen, even small boys, imitating their elders in every detail, will give their sweethearts some small gift: a pinch of tobacco, a shell, or simply a blossom. Boys of riper years have to give a more substantial present: half a stick of tobacco, a betel-nut or two, and, from time to time, a turtle-shell ring, a shell disc, or even an armlet. Otherwise a girl would object: *Gala buwam, apayki,* "You have no payment to give me—I refuse." And his reputation for meanness would spread, and interfere with his future conquests. In the later and more permanent intrigues, especially when they grow towards marriage, it is usual to give substantial presents from time to time rather than a small gift every morning.

When marriage is concluded, payment for sexual intercourse becomes the complicated family affair described in chapter v, in which husband and wife, their household and the wife's family, father and children, children and maternal uncle are all involved. The personal account between husband and wife consists in her offering him permanent sexual accommodation, which he repays by all he gives to the children in love, care, and goods. The children, as we know, are regarded as legally hers, and not his. The early cares he bestows on the children, their education, and even his love for them are accounted for

by this obligation. "The payment for sleeping with the mother," "the payment for sexual services of the mother" and similar phrases are repeated when the subject is discussed. Thus the commercial aspect of love also, and very definitely, obtains in marriage.[1]

It must, however, be clearly understood that the word "commercial" is merely used to describe the give-and-take principle in erotic relations, and that this principle is here, as in all other social relations, but one, and that not the most significant, aspect of them. Above all, it would be entirely erroneous to draw any parallel with forms of prostitution in higher cultures. The essence of prostitution is that payment is the woman's motive for surrender. In the Trobriands, love-making is as spontaneous on the part of the girl as on the part of the boy. The gift is a custom, not a motive. The institution is much more akin to our custom of giving presents to a fiancée or to someone whom we merely admire than to the institution of purely commercialized sexual services, which are the essence of prostitution.

8

JEALOUSY

One more question intimately concerned with the problem of personal attraction remains to be discussed. Love strives not only for possession but for monopoly; hence the strong emotional reaction of jealousy. It has been

[1] Cf. *Argonauts,* pp. 177, 178, where I have *incorrectly* classed the father's gifts to his children as "free gifts." The rectification of this error will be found in *Crime and Custom,* pp. 40, 41.

affirmed by several ethnographers of tribes with great sexual freedom, that jealousy does not exist among them. In support of this, nothing more is adduced than the simple fact of licence. But the connection between licence and the absence of jealousy is by no means self-evident.

In the Trobriands, in spite of considerable licence, jealousy certainly exists. A man who desires a girl will not easily give way to a rival, as the frequent quarrels and fights occasioned by sexual rivalry bear witness. Nor will a man who has established some rights over a woman, whether of marriage or of engagement, or merely of a liaison, tolerate any infringement of these. There exists among them, in fact, both the jealousy of passion and that colder type based on ambition, power, and possession. As we know, relations within the *bukumatula* (bachelors' and unmarried girls' house) are subject to a definite code, and the infringement of individual rights is deeply resented and considered reprehensible. As we also know, adultery is a grave offence, punishable even by death. Among young boys and girls serious enmities and fights have been known to arise from one encroaching on the preserves of another, and even among children, fights are occasioned by jealousy.

This passion, however, is, as are all others, susceptible to social influence. When custom demands that a man should surrender his sweetheart, and this can be honourably done, he will submit. This happens, as we know, in the case of visiting *kula* strangers, and of youths who are guests in a village where a death has recently occurred. Also, there are occasions, less readily condoned, where

girls go on a *katuyausi* or steal out of the village to meet an *ulatile* party.

I was impressed by what might be called the reverse side of jealousy. The way in which boys would complain to me about such custom-sanctioned defection; the way in which they dwelt on the subject and described it with apparent depression, but not without some morbid curiosity; and the insistence with which they would return to it, gave me the impression that there was for them some element of pleasurable excitement in the situation. Whether jealousy among the Trobrianders is an emotion with two almost directly contradictory feeling-tones which alternate, the one strongly unpleasant, and the other somewhat pleasurable and sexually stimulating, it is difficult to say. But one or two facts as to the relation between native women and white men throw additional light on the subject.

Thus it is a notorious fact that Sinakadi, an important but impecunious chief of Sinaketa, prostitutes his wives to white men. He is old now, and is said to have married a young girl specially for this purpose; but he began the practice long ago, according to common report, even before a government station was established on the Trobriands. One of his sons, now a young man, is doing exactly the same thing. A white trader told me that he knew a native who seemed very much attached to and extremely jealous of his comely young wife. This native used to procure girls for the trader. On one occasion when he was unable to find anyone else, he brought his wife, and waited for her on the doorstep. Such facts

throw an interesting side-light on the working of jealousy in these natives.

The social, cultural, and directly emotional motives in jealousy will be more easily isolated by distinguishing its several types with their corresponding sanctions. In the first place there is jealousy which springs from infringement of rights rather than from thwarted instincts or wounded feeling. The taboo on the chief's wives is an example, and in former times was extremely strict. Even in the case of a very old man, who was neither attached to his young wives nor even living with them, adultery would constitute a capital offence. The misconduct of To'uluwa's wives with his sons, a case in point already quoted, and the adultery of the wife of M'tabalu, would never have been condoned in the old days. But even the wife of a commoner, if caught *in flagrante*, might have been killed with her lover. This kind of jealousy, arising from purely social considerations, is also expressed in the close watch kept over the widow by the dead man's relatives.

In the second place there is the jealous resentment of infidelities which interfere with a permanent relation. This emotional reaction is present, together with the social one, in the concrete instances quoted in the foregoing paragraph.

Finally there is the pure sexual jealousy from thwarted impulse or desire which will impel a man or a boy to violent and vindictive actions.

9

BEAUTY, COLOUR, AND SCENT IN LOVE-MAKING

We know by now how a Trobriand girl and boy are first attracted to each other, how they come together, how their intrigue develops, leading to separation or marriage; but we know little as yet of the way in which two lovers spend their time together and enjoy each other's presence.

In this as in all other aspects of Melanesian tribal life, custom and convention dictate to a large extent even the details of behaviour. Individual deviations always exist, but they fall within a relatively narrow range; much narrower unquestionably than at our own culture level. A lover does not expect from his or her partner the improvisation of a love rhapsody, but rather a properly executed repetition of traditional routine. The places in which it is desirable to make love, the manner of making it, the very types of caress, are defined by tradition. Independent informants would describe exactly the same procedure almost in the same words.

The word *kwakwadu* is a technical term which signifies something like "amorous transactions" or "being together for purposes of love." It would be easier perhaps to express it in German, as *erotisches Beisammensein*, or by the American colloquialism "petting party" or "petting session." English speech habits are, unfortunately, refractory to stereotyped terminology, except in matters of morality. The *kwakwadu* has a wide meaning. It sig-

nifies a collective excursion, or party of several couples setting out on a love picnic; the being together of two people who are in love with each other—a sort of erotic *tête-à-tête;* the caresses and approaches before the final union. It is never used euphemistically to designate the sexual act. At a collective picnic some of the games described in the previous chapter are first played in common, and afterwards the lovers seek solitude two by two. We shall attempt to reconstruct the behaviour of a pair who have left such a party, or else started off alone in order to enjoy each other's company in some favourite spot.

The scrub surrounding the village, which is periodically cut for gardens, grows in a dense underbrush and does not everywhere offer a desirable resting place. Here and there, however, a large tree, such as the *butia,* is left behind for the sake of its perfumed flowers, or there may be a group of pandanus trees. Pleasant shady places, too, can be found under an old tree in one of the groves which often mark the site of a deserted village, whose fruit trees, coco-nut palms, and big banyans make an oasis within the stunted tropical undergrowth of recent cultivation. On the coral ridge (*raybwag*) many spots invite a picnic party. Cavities and hollows in the coral, rocks of queer or attractive shape, giant trees, thickets of fern, flowering hibiscus make the *raybwag* a mysterious and attractive region. Especially delightful is the part which overlooks the open sea towards the east, towards the islands of Kitava, Iwa, and Gawa. The roar of the breakers on the fringing reef, the dazzling sand and foam and the blue sea, provide the favourite surroundings for

PLATE 70

LOUSING

[*Ch. X*, 9]

native love-making, and also constitute the scene in which the mythical drama of incestuous love has been laid by native imagination (see ch. xiv).

In such places the lovers enjoy the scent and colour of the flowers, they watch the birds and insects, and go down to the beach to bathe. In the heat of the day, or during the hot seasons, they search for shady spots on the coral ridge, for water-holes and for bathing places. As the cool of the evening approaches they warm themselves on the hot sand, or kindle a fire, or find shelter in some nook among the coral rocks. They amuse themselves by collecting shells and picking flowers or scented herbs, to adorn themselves. Also they smoke tobacco, chew betel-nut, and, when they are thirsty, look for a coco-nut palm, the green nut of which yields a cooling drink. They inspect each other's hair for lice and eat them—a practice disgusting to us and ill associated with love-making, but to the natives a natural and pleasant occupation between two who are fond of each other, and a favourite pastime with children (pl. 70). On the other hand, they would never eat heavy food on such occasions and especially would never carry it with them from the village. To them the idea of European boys and girls going out for a picnic with a knapsack full of eatables is as disgusting and indecent as their *kwakwadu* would be to a Puritan in our society (see also ch. iii, sec. 4).

All such pleasures—the enjoyment of landscape, of colour and scent in the open air, of wide views and of intimate corners of nature—are essential features in their love-making. For hours, sometimes for days, lovers will

go out together gathering fruits and berries for food and enjoying each other's company in beautiful surroundings. I made a point of confirming these particulars from a number of concrete instances; for, in connection with the question of romantic love already discussed, I was interested to know whether love-making had direct satisfaction only for its object, or whether it embraced a wider sensory and æsthetic enjoyment. Many of the pleasures which enter into general games, amusements, and festivities, also form part of personal *kwakwadu.*

Of course, love is not made only in the open air; there are also special occasions for bringing lovers together in the village. In chapter iii, the special institution of the *bukumatula* and the more provisional arrangements of younger people have been mentioned. In the village, however, privacy is almost impossible except at night, and the activities of lovers are much more curtailed. They lie next to each other on a bunk and talk, and when they are tired of this, proceed to make love.

10

THE CONVERSATION OF TWO LOVERS

It is not easy to reconstruct personal conversations which in their nature take place under very intimate conditions and without witnesses. A question couched in such general terms as "What do a boy and a girl talk to each other about at a *kwakwadu?*" is likely to be answered by a grin, or, if the man is familiar with the ethnographer, by the standard reply to all difficult questions: *Tonagowa*

yoku, "you fool"; in other words, "Don't ask silly questions."

From the spontaneous confidences of some of my friends, however, I obtained some glimpses into what passes during these *tête-à-têtes*. A boy would often repeat, for the sake of impressing me or just to give me some definite news, what a girl told him and what he replied, or vice versa. There is no doubt that the Trobriand lover boasts freely to his sweetheart and expects a sympathetic listener and an enthusiastic response. I have already mentioned how Monakewo used to tell me of the great impression he had made on Dabugera and how greatly she admired his exploits and virtues. Mekala'i was equally certain that Bodulela was deeply impressed by any achievements which he related to her. Gomaya, a young chief of Sinaketa and an incurable braggart, would tell me how his betrothed, to whom he was plighted in infancy, would wonder at his stories of personal excellence, of magical knowledge and of overseas adventure. In fact, whenever a Trobriander went into details about his love affairs, the impression made on his mistress would never be absent from his account, and would be related to me, in native fashion, as fragments of an actual conversation.

Gossip about other people's business, and especially about their love affairs, is also a common subject of conversation between two lovers; and on many occasions much of it ultimately came my way, in that a boy would repeat what he had heard from his sweetheart. For the rest, they talk of what they are doing at that moment, the

beauties of nature, and of the things they like or do not like. Sometimes, too, a boy will vaunt his exploits in those pursuits in which women do not usually participate, such as *kula* expeditions, fishing, bird-snaring, or hunting.

Thus a love affair may be set in a rich context of general interest, as regards both mutual activity and conversation; but this varies with the intelligence and the personality of the partners. Ambitious, imaginative people would not be content with mere sensuous pleasure; but the obtuse and limited would proceed no doubt, directly to the cruder stages—the usual caresses and the sexual act.

II

EROTIC APPROACHES

The place occupied by the kiss in South Sea communities is of general and perennial interest. It is a widely prevalent opinion that kissing is not practised outside the Indo-European horizon. Students of anthropology, as well as frequenters of comic opera, know that even in such high civilizations as those of China and Japan the kiss as a gesture in the art of love is unknown. A European shudders at the idea of such cultural deficiency. For his comfort, it may be said at once that things are not so black as they look.

To get at the facts and to see these in their right perspective, the question must first be put more precisely. If we ask whether lip-activities play any part in love-making, the answer is that they certainly do. As we shall see, both in the preliminary caresses and in the later

stages, the mouth is busy. On the other hand, if we define kissing more precisely as a prolonged pressing of mouth against mouth with slight intermittent movements —and I think that all competent authorities would agree with such a definition and with the proposition that this is the main erotic preliminary in Europe and the United States—then the kiss is not used in Trobriand love-making. Certainly it never forms a self-contained independent source of pleasure, nor is it a definite preliminary stage of love-making, as is the case with us. This caress was never spontaneously mentioned by the natives, and, to direct inquiries, I always received a negative answer. The natives know, however, that white people "will sit, will press mouth against mouth—they are pleased with it." But they regard it as a rather insipid and silly form of amusement.

Kissing in the narrow sense is also absent as a cultural symbol, whether as a greeting, an expression of affection, or a magical or ritual act. The rubbing of noses (*vayauli*) as an act of greeting is rare, and never done except between very near relatives; it is said that parents and children or husband and wife would thus celebrate their reunion after long separation. A mother who is constantly petting her small child, will frequently touch it with her cheek or her lips; she will breathe upon it, or, putting her open mouth against its skin, caress it gently. But the exact technique of kissing is not used between mother and child, and in no form is it so conspicuous with them as with us.

The absence of kissing in the narrower sense brings us

to a deeper difference in love-making. The natives, I am convinced, never indulge in erotic caresses as a self-sufficient activity; that is, as a stage in love-making which covers a long period of time before full bodily union is accomplished. This is a local and not a racial character, for I am equally convinced (see above) that among other Melanesians, in Dobu and probably among the Motu, in the Sinaugolo and Mailu tribes, engaged couples do meet, lie together, and caress each other without cohabitation.

The comparison, however, cannot be satisfactory, for my knowledge of the latter tribes is much less complete than in the case of the Trobriands, and so I can only suggest a subject for further research. It is extremely important to know whether the nature of preliminary love is correlated with the level of culture, or with the social regulation of it—above all, with the moral restrictions condemning prenuptial intercourse.

We have spoken rather fully about kissing, to satisfy a general curiosity on this point. Let us now observe the behaviour of two lovers alone on their bunk in the *bukumatula*, or in a secluded spot in the *raybwag* or jungle. A mat is usually spread on the boards or on the earth, and, when they are sure of not being observed, skirt and pubic leaf are removed. They may at first sit or lie side by side, caressing each other, their hands roaming over the surface of the skin. Sometimes they will lie close together, their arms and legs enlaced. In such a position they may talk for a long time, confessing their love with endearing phrases, or teasing each other (*katudabuma*). So near to each other, they will rub noses. But though

there is a good deal of nose-rubbing, cheek is also rubbed against cheek, and mouth against mouth. Gradually the caress becomes more passionate, and then the mouth is predominantly active; the tongue is sucked, and tongue is rubbed against tongue; they suck each other's lower lips, and the lips will be bitten till blood comes; the saliva is allowed to flow from mouth to mouth. The teeth are used freely, to bite the cheek, to snap at the nose and chin. Or the lovers plunge their hands into the thick mop of each other's hair and tease it or even tear it. In the formulæ of love magic, which here as elsewhere abound in over-graphic exaggeration, the expressions, "drink my blood" and "pull out my hair" are frequently used (see next chapter). This sentence, volunteered by a girl's sweetheart, describes his erotic passion:

Binunu vivila dubilibaloda, bigadi;
She sucks woman lower lip (ours), she bites;
tagiyu bimwam.
we spit, she drinks.

Erotic scratches are an even more direct way of hurting and of drawing blood. We have already spoken of these as the conventional invitation of a girl to a boy. We also described their place in tribal festivities (ch. ix, sec. 5). But they are also a part of intimate love-making, and a mutual expression of passion:

Tayobobu, tavayauli, takenu deli;
We embrace, we rub noses, we lie together;

bikimali vivila otubwaloda, ovilavada
she scratches woman on back (ours), on shoulders (ours);
sene bwoyna, tanukwali, bitagwalayda
very much good, we know, she loves us
senela.
very much indeed.

On the whole, I think that in the rough usage of passion the woman is the more active. I have seen far larger scratches and marks on men than on women; and only women may actually lacerate their lovers as in the case mentioned in chapter ix, section 5. The scratching is carried even into the passionate phases of intercourse. It is a great jest in the Trobriands to look at the back of a man or a girl for the hall-marks of success in amorous life. Nor have I ever seen a comely girl or boy without some traces of *kimali* in the proper places. Subject to general rules of good taste and specific taboo (see ch. xiii), the *kimali* marks are a favourite subject for jokes; but there is also much secret pride in their possession.

Another element in love-making, for which the average European would show even less understanding than for the *kimali*, is the *mitakuku*, the biting off of eyelashes. As far as I could judge from descriptions and demonstrations, a lover will tenderly or passionately bend over his mistress's eyes and bite off the tip of her eyelashes. This, I was told, is done in orgasm as well as in the less passionate preliminary stages. I was never quite able to grasp either the mechanism or the sensuous value of this caress. I have no doubt, however, as to its reality, for I

have not seen one boy or girl in the Trobriands with the long eyelashes to which they are entitled by nature. In any case, it shows that the eye to them is an object of active bodily interest. Still less enthusiasm will probably be felt by the romantic European towards the already mentioned custom of catching each other's lice and eating them. To the natives, however, it is a pastime, which, while pleasant in itself, also establishes an exquisite sense of intimacy.

12

THE ACT OF SEX

The following is a condensed description of the whole process of love-making, with several characteristic incidents, given me by my friend Monakewo:

Takwakwadu: dakova, kadiyaguma,
We make love: our fire, our lime gourd,

kaditapwaki: kada gala, mwasila. Bitala,
our tobacco; food (ours) no, shame. We go,

tala kaytala ka'i kayviava; tasisu,
we go (for) one (wood) tree tree big; we sit,

takakakutu; taluki vivila:
we louse and eat; we tell to woman:

"takayta." Biwokwo,
"we copulate" (let us copulate). It is finished,

bitala ovalu; ovalu tala obukumatula,
we go to village; in village we go to bachelors' house,

takenu tabigatona.		*Kidama*	*kadumwaleta,*
we lie, we chatter.		Supposing	we are alone,
taliku	*yavida,*	*biliku*	*dabela*
we undo	pubic leaf ours	she undoes	skirt (hers)

tamasisi.
we sleep.

This may be freely rendered: "When we go on a love-making expedition we light our fire; we take our lime gourd (and chew betel-nut), we take our tobacco (and smoke it). Food we do not take, we would be ashamed to do so. We walk, we arrive at a large tree, we sit down, we search each other's heads and consume the lice, we tell the woman that we want to copulate. After it is over we return to the village. In the village we go to the bachelors' house, lie down, and chatter. When we are alone he takes off the pubic leaf, she takes off her fibre skirt: we go to sleep."

With regard to the act itself, perhaps the most noteworthy feature is the position.

The woman lies on her back, the legs spread and raised, and the knees flexed. The man kneels against her buttocks, her legs resting on his hips. The more usual position, however, is for the man to squat in front of the woman and, with his hands resting on the ground, to move towards her or, taking hold of her legs, to pull her towards him. When the sexual organs are close to each other the insertion takes place. Again the woman may stretch her legs and place them directly on the man's hips, with his arms outside them, but the far more usual posi-

tion is with her legs embracing the man's arms, and resting on the elbows.

An interesting text gives the description of both methods:

Kidama vivila sitana ikanupwagega;
Supposing woman a little bit she lies open (-legged);
kaykela bima ogipomada.
legs hers it comes on our hips.
Kidama ikanupwagega senela,
Supposing she lies open (-legged) very much indeed,
ikanubeyaya, kaykela bima o
she lies right open, leg hers it comes on
mitutugu kaylavasi.
end mine elbow.

Which may be rendered:

"When the woman opens her legs only a little, her legs come (i.e. rest) on my hips; when she lies with legs spread out very much, lies right open, her legs rest on my elbows."

Congress is sometimes effected in a reclining position. Lying side by side, with the lower limbs pressed against each other, the woman places her upper leg on top of the man, and the insertion is made. This mode, which is less popular, is used at night in the *bukumatula* (bachelors' house). It is less noisy, as the natives say, and requires less space; and is done in order not to wake up the other inmates of the house (see ch. iii, sec. 4).

No other positions are used. Above all, the natives

despise the European position and consider it unpractical and improper. The natives, of course, know it, because white men frequently cohabit with native women, some even being married to them. But, as they say: "The man overlies heavily the woman; he presses her heavily downwards, she cannot respond (*ibilamapu*)."

Altogether the natives are certain that white men do not know how to carry out intercourse effectively. As a matter of fact, it is one of the special accomplishments of native cook-boys and servants who have been for some time in the employ of white traders, planters, or officials, to imitate the copulatory methods of their masters. In the Trobriands, Gomaya was perhaps the best actor in this respect. He still remembered a famous Greek buccaneer (Nicholas Minister was the name he went by among other beachcombers), who had lived in the islands even before the establishment of the government station. Gomaya's performance consisted in the imitation of a very clumsy reclining position, and in the execution of a few sketchy and flabby movements. In this the brevity and lack of vigour of the European performance were caricatured. Indeed, to the native idea, the white man achieves orgasm far too quickly; and there seems to be no doubt that the Melanesian takes a much longer time and employs a much greater amount of mechanical energy to reach the same result. This, together with the handicap of the unfamiliar position, probably accounts for the complaints of white men that native girls are not responsive. Many a white informant has spoken to me about perhaps the only word in the native language which he ever

learned, *kubilabala* ("move on horizontally"), repeated to him with some intensity during the sexual act. This verb defines the horizontal motion during sexual intercourse, which should be mutual. The noun *bilabala*, originally means a horizontally lying log; and *bala* as a root or prefix, conveys a general sense of the horizontal. But the verb, *bilabala*, does not convey the immobility of a log; on the contrary, it gives the idea of horizontal motion. The natives regard the squatting position as more advantageous, both because the man is freer to move than when kneeling, and because the woman is less hampered in her responsive movements—*bilamapu*—a compound of *bila*, from *bala*, horizontal, and *mapu*, repay or respond. Also in the squatting position the man can perform the treading motion (*mtumuta*), which is a useful dynamic element in successful copulation. Another word, *korikikila*, implies at the same time rubbing and pushing, a copulatory motion.

As the act proceeds and the movements become more energetic, the man, I was told, waits until the woman is ready for orgasm. Then he presses his face to the woman's, embraces her body and raises it towards him, she putting her arms round him at the same time and, as a rule, digging her nails into his skin. The expression for orgasm is *ipipisi momona* = the seminal fluid discharges. The word *momona* signifies both the male and the female discharge; as we know, the natives do not make any sharp distinction between male semen and the glandular secretions of a woman, at least, not as regards their respective functions. The same expression *ipisi*

momona is also applied to (male or female) nocturnal pollution. The word for onanistic ejaculation is *isulumomoni*, "it boils over sexual fluid." Male masturbation is called *ikivayli kwila*—"he manipulates penis"; female masturbation is described in concrete phrases and has no specific name.

An interesting personal account was given to me by Monakewo and illustrates some of the points just mentioned. It was hardly discreet of him to speak of his mistress by name; but the ethnographer's love for the concrete instance may excuse my not emending it.

Bamasisi deli *Dabugera;* *bayobobu,*
I sleep together Dabugera; I embrace,
bavakayla *bavayauli.* *Tanunu dubilibaloda,*
I hug all length, I rub noses. We suck lower lips ours,
pela *bi'ulugwalayda;* *mayela* *tanunu;*
because we feel excited; tongue his we suck;
tagadi *kabulula;* *tagadi* *kala gabula;* *tagadi*
we bite nose his; we bite his chin; we bite
kimwala; *takabi* *posigala,*
jaw (cheek) his; we take hold (caress) armpit his,
visiyala. *Bilivala* *minana:* *"O didakwani,*
groin his. She says this woman: "O it itches,
lubaygu, *senela;* *kworikikila*
lover mine, very much indeed; rub and push
tuvayla, *bilukwali* *wowogu—*
again, it feels pleasant body mine—

kwopinaviyaka, *nanakwa* *bipipisi*
do it vigorously, quick (so that) it squirts
momona:— *kwalimtumutu* *tuvayla* *bilukwali*
sexual fluid:— tread again it feels pleasant
wowogu."
body mine."

Free Translation

"When I sleep with Dabugera I embrace her, I hug her with my whole body, I rub noses with her. We suck each other's lower lip, so that we are stirred to passion. We suck each other's tongues, we bite each other's noses, we bite each other's chins, we bite cheeks and caress the armpit and the groin. Then she will say: 'O my lover, it itches very much . . . push on again, my whole body melts with pleasure . . . do it vigorously, be quick, so that the fluids may discharge . . . tread on again, my body feels so pleasant.' "

The same informant gave me the following samples of a conversation which would occur after the act, when the two rested in each other's arms:

"Kayne *tombwaylim* *yaygu?"*
"Whether sweetheart thine I?"
"Mtage! *nabwayligu* *yoku—* *sene*
"Yes! sweetheart mine thou— very much
magigu; *tuta, tuta, bitakayta;* *sene*
desire mine; time, time, we copulate; very much
migimbwayligu *migim* *tabuda!"*
face yours beloved by me face thine cross-cousins!"

"Gala	magigu	bakeyaud	wala	uwala
"No	desire mine	you get hold	one	woman

nasu'a;	yoku wala,	yoyga."
new woman;	thou indeed,	I."

"Am I thy sweetheart?" "Yes, thou art my sweetheart; I love thee very much; always, always we shall cohabit. I love thy face very much, it is that of a cross-cousin (the right woman for me)." "I do not desire that thou shouldst take a new woman; just thou and I."

I was informed that sexual relations between married people would be on the same lines, but, from the following text, it is clear that passion ebbs with time.

Vigilava'u	imaikoi	kouyawakaiva
Married newly	they sleep	single one

kabai;	kimugo	vayava'i	kikouyagaiva,
bed theirs;	it matures	matrimony	it is old,

kouyaga kabala,	kouyaga kabada.	Bisala'u	
one bed her,	one bed ours.	It is energetic	

uwaui,	magigi	bakeyaud,	bisimaud
body theirs,	desire theirs	they copulate,	they lie

deli	kisimukabaud	kisayaboi,
together	they bite eyelashes	they rub noses,

bigedaki.
they bite.

"Newly married people sleep together in one bed. When matrimony has matured, when it has become old, she sleeps in one bed, and we [i.e. the husband] sleep

in another. When they feel sexually vigorous they want to cohabit; then they lie together, they bite their eyelashes, they rub their noses, they bite each other."

Here my informant, Tokulubakiki, a married man, tries to convey the idea that even long-married persons can behave at times as lovers.

In conclusion,[1] I should like to draw the attention of the reader to the data supplied by Dr. W. E. Roth and other informants concerning the sexual life of the aborigines of Australia.[2] The subject is of considerable importance as the mechanism is very characteristic of the whole nature of erotic approach. The manner in which the Queensland aborigines copulate closely resembles that described in this chapter. In both regions the act can be so carried out that there is the minimum of bodily contact. I think that this to a great extent accounts for the undiscriminating way in which young and handsome boys will sometimes fornicate with old and repulsive women. On the other hand, where love exists, the man can bend over the woman or the woman raise herself to meet him and contact can be as full and intimate as is desired.

[1] Compare also what has been said about native ideas concerning the anatomy and physiology of procreation and the psycho-physiological mechanism of falling in love, chapter vii.

[2] Dr. W. E. Roth, *Ethnological Studies Among the North-West Central Queensland Aborigines*, 1897, and H. Basedow, in *J.R.A.I.*, 1927, on "Subincision and Kindred Rites of the Australian Aboriginal," pp. 151-6.

CHAPTER XI

THE MAGIC OF LOVE AND BEAUTY

Perhaps nothing is so akin to the mysterious and stirring condition which we call falling in love, as that mystic expectancy of miraculous intervention and of benevolent and unexpected happenings which comes to all men at certain psychological moments and forms the foundation of the human belief in magic. There is a desire in every one of us to escape from routine and certainty, and it can be said, without exaggeration, that to most men nothing is more cheerless and oppressive than the rigidity and determination with which the world runs; and nothing more repugnant than the cold truths of science, which express and emphasize the determination of reality. Even the most sceptical at times rebel against the inevitable causal chain, which excludes the supernatural and, with it, all the gifts of chance and good fortune. Love, gambling and magic have a great deal in common.

In a primitive community, not yet in bond to science, magic lies at the root of innumerable beliefs and practices. *Megwa,* which may be almost exactly rendered by our word "magic," is, to the Trobriander, a force residing in man, transmitted to him from generation to generation through the medium of tradition. This force can only become active by the performance of a ritual appropriate to the occasion, by the recital of proper incan-

tations, and by the observance of specific taboos. In all matters relating to love, it is of fundamental importance. Magic can endow with charm and engender love; magic can alienate affection in consort or lover; and magic can produce or enhance personal beauty.

I

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEAUTY

The magic of which the purpose is so to increase personal attractiveness that the performer may become erotically irresistible to some one member of the opposite sex, is but one among several kinds of beauty magic. Personal appearance and charm are not valued on amorous grounds only. A woman in her first pregnancy, as we know, is subject to an elaborate ritual, with spells to enhance her bodily beauty, which is in no way intended to make her attractive to men. She is sexually taboo to her own husband; and the idea of adultery under such circumstances is, without exaggeration, morally repulsive to the natives. Again, a beauty magic has been described elsewhere which is performed at a certain stage in an overseas expedition.[1] This has no erotic reference—indeed love-making, on such occasions, is often taboo—but its purpose is to make the personal charm of the visitors so irresistible that they will be offered many gifts of valuable ornaments. The heroes of ancestral days, who make themselves beautiful for reasons which have

[1] See *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*, ch. xiii, sec. 1, and especially pp. 335-6. Compare also footnote on p. 219, vol. 1, of this work.

nothing to do with sex, figure in the mythology of the *kula* (*Argonauts*, ch. xii). It is important that the practice of beauty magic to a directly sexual end should be placed in its proper setting in this general and intense interest in personal charm.

2

CEREMONIAL OCCASIONS OF BEAUTY MAGIC

In our description of the opportunities given by festive occasions for mutual admiration and contact, the importance of beauty and skill in dancing, and of "deportment" was made clear. Beauty magic is a part of the personal preparation for all big festivals; special charms are recited over certain parts of the body during the care and cleansing of them, and during ornamentation. This is always done on the last and culminating day of the period of festival dancing (*usigola*) or of competitive games (*kayasa*), during the third feast in which they terminate (ch. ix, secs. 3 and 4). The tension, interest and personal animosities characteristic of these competitive displays must be realized before we can understand the nature and importance of the beauty ceremonial; and we shall, therefore, give a short account of the proceedings as ritual observances, but without returning to the games and amusements round which they centre (see above, ch. ix, sec. 2).

The festive period, which lasts twenty-eight days, always begins, as we know, at the full moon after the return of the ancestral spirits. It is opened by a cere-

CEREMONIAL DISTRIBUTION OF FOOD

AFTER THE DISTRIBUTION

Women collecting food. The four houses in the front row are store-houses; behind are living huts, built entirely on the ground.

[*Ch. XI, 2*]

monial distribution of food (*sagali*) (pls. 71 and 72). A *sagali* is a very important institution in the Trobriands; it accompanies most ceremonial occasions, such as mortuary rites, commemoration feasts, competitive enterprises and the annual season of amusement. The mortuary *sagali* (distributions), which are the most important, are based upon the division into clans and sub-clans (see ch. vi, sec. 4, and ch. xiii, sec. 5), since members of only one clan always act as distributors, men of the remaining clans receiving the food. At other times the apportionment of the food follows some other sociological principle. In all cases, however, it is the headman of the local community who officiates as "master of the distribution" (*tolisagali*). He and his kinsmen arrange the allotment of each heap of yams, moving among them, discussing and memorizing (pl. 71). After that the same committee slowly walk from one heap to another and the master or his spokesman calls out the name or description of the recipient. When this has been done, the men move away from the place and, after a time, the women belonging to each recipient collect the yams in baskets and carry them to their storehouses (pl. 72). In a small *sagali,* such as is held within the community at the beginning of a dancing or playing season, the duty of providing the food invariably falls on the master and his kinsmen, while the renown (*butura*) of the distribution goes to their credit, and those who receive food are responsible to them for the success of the entertainments which follow.

The distribution in fact imposes an obligation on all

participants to go on steadily with the dance, game, or whatever special display has been chosen, for the whole period. In an *usigola* (dancing period) each heap of food would be allotted according to its size, and be given to a special class of performer. One of the largest would go to the leaders of the round dance (*tokolimatala*). The three men who perform the complicated figure dance, the solemn *kasawaga*, receive an equally big portion. The singers (*tokwaypo'u*), a body of no mean importance, also have their special place in the distribution. Smaller heaps of different sizes are given to the drummers, the mutes in the figure dance, the boys who catch the iguana for the drumskin, and to all the rest of the villagers, according to the part they play in the proceedings. In a *sagali* (distribution), therefore, the respective importance of each group is emphasized and this causes a certain amount of tension and jealousy, and some little boasting.

On the first day, magic is performed over a conch-shell and over food. The conch-shell is blown on that day and also during the dance; the food is buried wherever a road enters the village. Both rites are meant magically to enhance the splendour of the performance. The charmed conch-shell announces the coming display with the thrilling ostentation of magical power. The burial of the food expresses the desire for plenty within the village, is a symbol of it, and is believed to effect it. I was unable to obtain the formula of this magic, so my information is but approximate.

After these ceremonies, the dancing period begins. At first, there is much to do in the way of learning, training,

and preliminary contests. In the middle of the month a second *sagali* (distribution of food) is held, called *katumwalela kasakasa* (the priming of the rank and file). There is a special dance on such a day, but no other rites are performed.

Finally, at the next full moon, there comes the *kovayse* (the winding up), which lasts for three days, and is the main festivity of the period. Two days before the full moon, there is a great communal eating of sago or taro pudding (see pls. 5 and 86). This day is called *itavakayse kaydebu* ("preparing of the dancing shield"), or *itavakayse bisila* ("preparing of the pandanus streamer"), in reference to the shield and streamer which are both used in dancing. On the next day, which is called *itokolukwa'i*, the same proceedings are repeated. On both days ceremonial dancing takes place.

The third day is called *luvayam*, "the day of consummation," or *lapula*, "the rounding-off day," and is a great occasion. People from many villages are invited, and begin to arrive in the morning, soon filling the village street and surrounding spaces. Each community sits in a group, camping on mats, surrounded with baskets and children. Those on more intimate terms with their hosts assist them in the preparations. The villagers, with serious set faces, move quickly to and fro among the guests, in gala dress, some already adorned for the dance—the men perhaps in female grass petticoats with the whole body decked out in valuable ornaments and flowers.

In the morning, the performance begins with an in-

augural round dance, the *mweli* (as on pls. 58, 65, 82). The *mweli* is followed at about noon by the ceremonial figure dance (*kasawaga*) (pl. 73). All is done in full dress and with great display, to the attentive observation of the onlookers. But this is only a preparation for what will follow.

After midday, the real ceremonial begins. The performers have now ritually to wash, dress, and ornament themselves. The visitors and the rest of the villagers are in the meantime engaged in a distribution of food and in feasting. Early in the afternoon, platters of baked yams, bananas, and coco-nut, and sometimes of fish as well, are brought to the guests and distributed to each community as *mitalela valu* ("eye of the village"—a metaphor which I was unable to elucidate). This is usually an occasion for much merriment and some horseplay, the givers and receivers exchanging appropriate jokes. Then each group sets to work on its portion, sitting round the platter with backs turned to the people from other village communities, as is required by good manners.

To complete our account of food distributions: there follows another *sagali*, in which the performers, now fully dressed and adorned, give presents to their *tabusia* (father's sisters, and their daughters). This is a repayment for the beauty magic which the women have performed upon them, to the description of which we now proceed.

REHEARSING OF A "KASAWAGA" DANCE

[*Ch. XI, 2*; *ch. II, 2*]

THE CROWD ASSEMBLED OUTSIDE THE VILLAGE FOR BEAUTY MAGIC

[*Ch. XI*, 3]

3

BEAUTY MAGIC: THE RITUAL OF WASHING

The ceremonial washing and decoration of the dancers is undertaken on this occasion by women of a special class, namely those who stand to them in the relation of *tabu*. We shall have to discuss the *tabu* and their place in the social scheme more fully in the chapters which follow (ch. xiii, sec. 6; see also ch. viii, sec. 2). In this place we need only mention that they are the approved and suitable partners for passing intrigues, for more stable liaisons or for marriage (see also ch. iv, sec. 4). It is their duty now to prepare the men for the dance, to deck them out with ornaments, with flowers and with paint, and to perform the magic incidental to each stage of the proceedings. In this, the ritual differs from the beauty magic in the *kula*, where each man makes his own magic and adorns himself. It is, on the other hand, similar in every respect to the beauty magic performed in the first pregnancy ceremony (see above, ch. viii, sec. 2).

The ceremonial dressing must, as always, be preceded by a ritual washing and cleansing, conducted to a running accompaniment of appropriate spells. The dancers and their attendants have now assembled outside the village in the grove, usually at a place not far from the water-hole (pl. 74). While the boys wait, their *tabula* recite a spell over some coco-nut fibre, with which the skin is to be rubbed as with a sponge; and over some soft leaves (usually of the *wageva* shrub), with which the skin will

be dried as with a towel. This is, in free translation, a *kaykakaya* (ablution) formula for the charming of the coco-nut fibre:[1]

Polishing, polishing off,
Cleansing, cleansing off,
There is one piece of fibre,
My own, a keen fibre, a buoyant fibre,
One which is as the morning star,
Which is as the full moon.
I cleanse his chest, I improve his head,
I improve his chest, I cleanse his head,
They climb up a pole (to admire),
They bind a flattery-bond round his knees.

This formula needs hardly any comment. It contains, as with most magic, the affirmation of the desired effect. It begins with a simple statement of the action of cleansing, and then extols the value of the coco-nut, comparing it to the morning star and to the full moon. The quality thus charmed into the coco-nut fibre will, it must be remembered, be later on transferred by friction to the skin of the bather. The idea of a light colour as an attribute of beauty is clearly expressed. The formula closes with an exaggerated statement of the effect to be produced by the magic. It is a custom to remove a piece of decoration from the body of a dancer or, in the case of people of high rank, to tie a string round his leg or arm, in order to express admiration. This is done with the words *Agu tilewa'i*, "my flattery-bond," and has to be redeemed by the admired dancer with a suitable present, which is also called *tilewa'i*—flattery-gift.

[1] For information as to the linguistic plan adopted in the translation of this and other native texts, see ch. xviii, "The Power of Words in Magic," in my *Argonauts of the Western Pacific.*

The following formula is spoken over the leaves used for drying the skin:—

I pull and pull, I pull hither and thither,
I pull my leaves of drying.
There is one kind of towel leaves,
The leaves of my companions;
Sere, parched leaves they are,
There is another kind of leaves, my towel leaves.
The leaves of me, of Ibo'umli,
They are keen buoyant flashing leaves.

Here again we find the usual affirmation, but the three middle lines are very interesting, for they show what might be called a typical case of magical relativity. The magic of the speaker, who in such cases always mentions his or her own name, is extolled at the expense of the magic of his or her companions. This type of phrasing is prevalent in magic applied in competitive activities.[1] The pulling of the leaves mentioned in the first line refers to the act of breaking them from the tree, and is a typical magical expression.

After the coco-nut fibre and the leaves have been charmed, each man takes his sponge and towel from his *tabula* and wraps it up in leaves, so that no magic virtue shall evaporate, even during the short passage from the spot where they are assembled to the water-hole, whither the men presently repair, leaving the women behind. Arrived there, the men remove all dress and ornament, and begin to wash, scraping off any paint which still remains from the morning. The coco-nut fibre is first unwrapped from its covering, and with this they rub their

[1] Compare, for instance, the formula referring to the speed of the canoe, *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*, p. 130.

skin. They rub carefully and earnestly and with a scrupulous minuteness, so that no part of the skin shall remain untouched. The face and the chest are perhaps most thoroughly scrubbed. With the same meticulous attention to detail, the skin is dried with the soft, spongy leaves. Then they return to their female magicians who are awaiting them.

4

BEAUTY MAGIC: THE RITUAL OF ADORNMENT

In the meantime, the women have been preparing various cosmetic substances. Each boy, before the washing, has taken off his most precious ornaments, such as shell-belt, armshells, and valuable necklaces, and left them with his *tabula;* so now the toilet can begin. First comes the anointing with charmed coco-nut oil, always the next stage after washing (I failed to obtain the magical formula of coco-nut oil). When this has been well rubbed all over the skin, by the man himself and not by the women, the latter proceed to stroke the skin with a mother-of-pearl shell (*kayeki* or *kaydobu*) (pl. 75). Slowly and gently each *tabula* presses the smooth shell up and down over his cheeks, his arms and his chest, and laterally across his forehead; reciting a formula, as she does so, in a clear audible voice. The words must always be spoken towards the boy's face which she is stroking.

Who makes the beauty magic?—
To heighten the beauty, to make it come out.
Who makes it on the slopes of Obukula?—
I, Tabalu, and my mate Kwaywaya.
We make the beauty magic.

PLATE 75

THE MAGIC OF MOTHER OF PEARL

[*Ch. XI*, 4]

I smooth out, I improve, I whiten!
Thy head I smooth out, I improve, I whiten!
Thy cheeks I smooth out, I improve, I whiten!
Thy nose I smooth out, I improve, I whiten!
Thy throat I smooth out, I improve, I whiten!
Thy neck I smooth out, I improve, I whiten!
Thy shoulders I smooth out, I improve, I whiten!
Thy breast I smooth out, I improve, I whiten!
Bright skin, bright; glowing skin, glowing.

The opening sentences of the formula again present a typical pattern of Trobriand magic. They express the traditional filiation of the actual performer. By reciting them, the magician charms, not in his own name, but as a representative, so to speak, of the original source of the magic. He—or in this case she—is even projected to the spot from whence the magic came; in the present rites on the slopes of Obukula, where the primeval grotto lies, near the village of Laba'i.[1] From this grotto, according to tradition, the earliest clan-ancestors emerged. There, also, the culture hero Tudava was raised and lived with his mother. It is the centre of traditional magic, of custom and of law. The formula identifies the speaker with two ancestors of the highest sub-clan, which takes its name from one of them, Tabalu. In the form given in this charm, the names can be either male or female. In practice, the masculine prefix *Mo-* or the feminine prefix *Bo-* is usually added to indicate whether a man or a woman is named. Thus, the old chief of Kasana'i, who was still alive on my first visit to the Trobriands, was called M'tabalu, and one of his nephews, Kwaywaya. The feminine forms would be Botabalu and Bokwaywaya

[1] For details of these legendary places and persons, see *Myth in Primitive Psychology.*

respectively. The rest of the formula is typical of all the longer spells and follows, step by step, the ritual applications to the object charmed. This is the longest formula and the most circumstantial act of beauty magic.

After the body has been anointed and smoothed with the pearl shell, the cosmetics are ceremonially applied. The mouth is painted with crushed betel-nut, while the following words are chanted:

Red paint, red paint thither.
Red paint, red paint hither.
One red paint of my companions,
It is sere, it is parched.
One red paint, my red paint
Of me, of Ibo'umli;
It is keen, it is buoyant, it is flashing:
My red paint.

This charm is similar in form to that of the *wageva* leaves.

When the mouth has been painted red, and perhaps a few lines in the same colour on the face, ornamental spirals are painted on the cheeks and forehead with *sayaku* (pl. 76), an aromatic black cosmetic, while the following words are recited:

O black paint, O buoyant black paint!
O black paint, O decorative black paint!
O black paint, O comely black paint!
Glowing eyes, glowing, bright eyes, bright.
For this is my *sayaku*.
The ornamenting, the alluring black paint indeed.

Then the hair is teased out with a comb to the accompaniment of this spell:

Who makes the beauty magic—
To heighten the beauty, to make it come out?
Who makes it on the slopes of Kituma?
I, Ibo'umli, make the beauty magic

MAGICAL FACE PAINTING

[*Ch. XI*, 4; *also ch. X*, 3]

PLATE 77

THE RITUAL PLACING OF THE "VANA"

[*Ch. XI*, 4]

To heighten the beauty, to make it come out.
I make it on the slopes of Kituma.
Keen is my comb, buoyant is my comb,
My comb is like the full moon,
My comb is like the morning star.
For this is my comb,
It will adorn me,
It will make me beloved indeed.

The name, Ibo'umli, occurring in this and one or two of the previous formulæ, is that of my informant. The place, Kituma, seems to be somewhere in the eastern archipelago, but my informant could not locate it exactly.

The toilet is now almost complete. The dancers are adorned with red flowers, aromatic herbs (*vana*), and garlands of the *butia*, which always blooms at this season (pl. 77). Appropriate incantations are said, but I shall not here cite them, for, although I obtained them, I cannot translate them satisfactorily. Finally, and with no adjuvant magic, such valuable ornaments as belts, armshells, necklaces, and last, but not least, the feather ornaments for the head, are put on the dancers. This last part of the toilet is done by men (pl. 78).

5

THE MAGIC OF SAFETY AND RENOWN AT FESTIVITIES

The elaborate ritual preparation of the dancers gives some indication of the tense emotional atmosphere which is characteristic of these big festive assemblies. The whole complex of dangerous passions, which, at the same time, spring from and generate the spirit of emulation, is wrought upon by such a culminating occasion for personal display.

While charms are being said over the dancers in the grove to give them added beauty, strength, and skill, two other kinds of magic are being prepared in the village, one of which is a measure of protection. There is a deep belief and a strong apprehension among the natives that black magic is being used against the dancers by the enemies of the village. Excellence in dancing is, indeed, one of those dangerous accomplishments which arouse great envy, and against which many an evil magician directs his powers. In fact, among the symptoms by which the wizard murderer is identified on the corpse of his victim, an important place is occupied by marks which signify: "This man was killed for his excellence in dancing." [1]

There is a special evil magic called *kaygisuri*, which is practised against the dancers, and indeed against all the bystanders except the sorcerer himself and his friends. I was not able to find out any details about this magic, how it is performed, or how it is supposed to act. But I have myself seen men preparing an antidote and making the counter-magic over the dancers. When the ritual toilet had been completed, small parcels were produced, containing magically treated wild ginger-root hermetically wrapped up in leaves. These were chewed by the magician, who then spat over the skin of the dancer. Next he took some aromatic leaves (*kwoibila*); over these he muttered a short formula, and then he put them into the armlets of the dancers.

The operation of these evil passions is not, in fact,

[1] Cf. *Crime and Custom*, part ii, ch. ii, p. 89.

wholly confined to the realm of idea and belief. The danger of a fight during the culminating day of a *kayasa* is even now not quite excluded. I was never present when feeling ran high enough to develop into a brawl, but, even so, I was strongly aware of a violence and ruthlessness in the behaviour of the performers and of the crowd, of a certain nervous mistrust and clinging together of each group, which confirmed the direct statements of the natives and my general information as to the conduct of such affairs in former times. Then the natives would come fully armed, with spears, wooden sword clubs, throwing sticks, and shields; each community would stand in a group with every man on his guard, suspicious of all strangers and on the look-out for possible trouble. When interest in the performance was at its height, people would push forward, the closer physical contact would cause suspicion of sorcery, and anything might be the signal for a fight. The presence of women in the various groups was another important source of danger, because of sexual rivalry.

To the envy and jealousy and mutual mistrust must be added an ardent desire for renown (*butura*). This finds full and independent expression in a further type of magic, which, with that of beauty and the specific against hostile sorcery, is launched into the exalted atmosphere of the village. This is the magic of *uributu*, "spreading of renown" (*uri*, from "*wori*," to strike, to flick, to spray; *butu*, root of "renown"). While the dancers are being made ready under the trees of the village grove; while a distribution of food is in progress on the central place,

the magician of glory, the *to'uributu*, proceeds in his own house to manufacture fame for his community. He is the same man who, on the first day of the festivities, a month ago, has performed the important magic of the conch-shells and the buried food. In the morning he has also prepared the scene of the dances by ritual sweeping of the *baku* (central place) with a charmed broom. Now comes his most important performance. On a large mat, folded over so that it encloses them, he places a drum, a conch-shell, and a few pieces of reed (*dadam*). Into the open mouth of this improvised magic bag he then chants his spells. The formula unfortunately I was not able to obtain.

His task is completed as the dancers are ready, fully dressed and waiting to start (pl. 79) the *lapula* or final dance. He gives one of the drummers the magic drum, and another man takes the charmed conch-shell.

The dancers, the singers, and the drummers now put themselves into position, ready for the signal. This is given by the magician of glory and one or two assistants. They run from the village street into the central place with the magic reed in their hands. Each of them must have both his hands upon the reed, which is pointing towards the ground. They strike the ground at intervals with the reed, while they utter a high-pitched scream (*igovasi*). Arrived at the opposite end of the place, they turn about and throw the reed into the air. The man who catches the reed scores a point in this contest for renown, and will be spoken of all over the district when the feast is gossiped about and its heroes mentioned.

Then the men of the reed utter another very loud cry and this gives the signal for the drummers to beat, for the conch-shells to blow, and for the dancers to begin their final performance.

6

THE MAGIC OF LOVE

We now pass to the most important system of magic connected with erotic life in the Trobriands, the magic of love. While the magic of beauty is always associated with ceremonial events, such as the *kula* (ceremonial exchange), first pregnancy celebrations, a *kayasa* (period of competitive activity), or an *usigola*, the magic of love is performed whenever occasion arises. While the magic of beauty, again, is always done openly and in public, that of love is a private matter and carried out on the individual's own initiative. This, of course, does not mean that there is anything illicit or clandestine about the magic of love. People who possess it boast about it, and talk about having put it in operation. Nor, from the nature of the rites, would it be possible to conceal it completely from its object. The magic of love becomes illicit only in so far as the love itself is illicit; as, for instance, when it is directed towards a chief's wife, or towards some other tabooed person.

It has been mentioned that this magic belongs to a *system*. A system of magic in the Trobriands is a series of spells, which accompany some chain of linked activities and are performed in a fixed order following the develop-

ment of the chain. In economic pursuits such as gardening, fishing, the construction of a canoe, or a *kula* expedition, or, again, in the magic of beauty just described, the rites accompany each successive stage of the enterprise, which naturally proceeds in a definite order.

But there are other spheres of magic where the system possesses a slightly different character. For instance, sorcery is believed to be the real cause of disease. Indeed, black magic must be effective and finally fatal, *provided* that it is properly carried out with due observance of all conditions, and *provided* that it is not met by a stronger counter-magic. The sorcerer opens the attack, the victim defends himself by securing counter-magic, and by making use of every factor which could counteract the full efficiency of black magic. Even if the sorcerer is successful, or partially so, the resultant illness does not develop along fixed lines as does the growth of a garden. Hence this system cannot follow a fixed sequence of events. Instead, a system of black magic consists of a succession of spells and rites which gradually increase in strength. When the sorcerer is successful, the increasing strength of his spells produces the more rapid decline of his victim until death supervenes. If the sorcerer is being thwarted, he launches increasingly strong formulæ in order to get at his victim through the barrier of precautions, adverse conditions, and counter-magic with which the latter has protected himself.

Let us examine black magic, not from the native, but from the ethnographer's point of view. A sorcerer either is paid to remove a victim or does so from personal mo-

PLATE 78

THE LAST TOUCH TO THE DANCERS' TOILET

[*Ch. XI*, 4]

PLATE 79

READY FOR THE FINAL DANCE

[*Ch. XI, 5; also ch. II, 2*]

tives. It may happen, by a mere coincidence, that the victim falls more or less seriously ill within a few weeks of the initial operations. As black magic is often advertised and always suspected, the illness is put down to its influence. If it be known that a powerful sorcerer, in the pay of a chief, is at work, suggestion may have a serious effect on the victim. It does not follow that he gives in utterly and dies, but I suspect that this occasionally happens.[1] As a rule, however, if pressed hard, the victim will mobilize all the forces of defence. He will put counter-magic in operation; set armed watches at night around him; move away to another place, change his diet, and observe all the taboos and other conditions of recovery. Thus we have the interplay of two forces in the imagination of the patient, corresponding to the interplay of the two real forces in his organism: resistance and disease. The progress of the system of magic, accompanied by the progress of the system of counter-magic, proceed side by side with the struggle between the organism and the invading forces of bacteria or malignant changes. Once the sorcerer has determined on black magic, or has received payment for it, he has to go through the whole repertory from the initial formula to

[1] I have no well-attested instance in my notes, but several cases of rapid wasting disease have appeared to me to belong to this category. Examples of people dying from sheer conviction that a broken taboo has a lethal influence, or that black magic, too powerful to be counteracted, has been set in motion against them, are numerous in ethnographic literature. The argument in the text does not rest on the assumption, however, that what might be called psychological death from sorcery is inevitable. It rests rather on the principle which we can regard as established by modern psycho-therapy that a conviction of good and bad influences working upon the patient's health is a most powerful element in the treatment. Cf. P. Janet, *Les Médications Psychologiques*, 1920.

the final pointing of the bone—even if he has to admit failure in the end. An unwittingly broken taboo is perhaps an important sorcerer's best excuse for unsuccess; but bad luck in the final application of charmed substances and powerful counter-magic also serve to account for the impotence of his magic. After such failure, the sorcerer bides his time and awaits a suitable opportunity—such, for instance, as his victim actually falling ill. Then he sets to work again. For though the natives believe that real illness (*silami*) can be produced only by magic, they are perfectly well aware that an indisposition (*katoulo*) which may be natural forms an excellent soil for the operations of sorcery.

It was necessary to enlarge on the general character of magical systems, and on the distinction between the system which follows the naturally determined progress of activity or enterprise, on the one hand, and the system which follows a course determined by the chance play of unknown factors on the other, in order to lay bare the essential character of love magic. This type also deals with a configuration of chances and elements which do not follow a definite natural course. Here also the belief is very strong that love magic, properly executed and not counteracted, is infallible. The *nanola* (mind and emotional centre) of man or woman cannot resist the complete consecutive series of rites and spells; even if it were no more than strongly affected by the initial steps, it must succumb to the cumulative ritual—that is if the magic be not magically counteracted. For here also there are causes which account for failure; the performer may not

have the words accurately or he may have broken a conditional taboo; or a counter-magic may frustrate his almost successful attempts. As in all supernatural control of chance, magical infallibility is absolute only under absolutely perfect conditions; that is to say, it is never attained in practice, though it may be claimed in theory.

7

THE RITE AND THE SPELL IN LOVE MAGIC

In following the practice of love magic through its successive stages, we must have in mind the setting of a Trobriand love story, in ordinary village life and among the customary forms of communication between the sexes. Although girls are said to practise this magic, it is more usual for the man to take the initiative. The story begins in the ordinary way: a boy is fascinated by a girl. If there be no response and he does not win her favours immediately, he resorts to the most potent way of courting her, that is by magic.

As in ordinary beauty magic, he must first wash or bathe in the sea. Thus he makes himself handsome and attractive; in the same rite he also charms a responsive affection into the loved one's heart. Let us suppose our hero to live near the sea. On his way to the shore, he gathers in the bush some of the soft spongy leaves of the *wageva*, *silasila*, or *ponatile* shrubs, and also some leaves from a tree with a specially smooth and clean bark—preferably from the *reyava* and *gatumwalila*. He puts the whole bundle into some large leaf and chants the

special washing formula over it. This corresponds to analogous spells in the *kula* beauty magic and in the beauty magic described in the previous sections.

One of the *kaykakaya* spells of love magic, which I obtained, may be freely rendered thus:

THE KAYKAKAYA SPELL

Leaves of dirt and leaves of cleansing,
Leaves of dirt and leaves of cleansing,
Smooth as the bark of the *reyava* tree
As the tail of the opossum.
My face shines in beauty;
I cleanse it with leaves;
My face, I cleanse it with leaves,
My eyebrows, I cleanse them with leaves.

And so on.

The boy then has to name various parts of the head and of the body, adding after each the word *ayolise*, which has been translated here: "I cleanse with leaves." These were the parts named by the informant who gave me the charm: head, face, eyebrows, nose, cheek, chin, jaws, throat, shoulders, larynx, breasts, flanks, armpits, buttocks, thighs, knees, calves, and feet. The formula then proceeds:

Beautiful will my face remain,
Flashing will my face remain,
Buoyant will my face remain!
No more it is my face,
My face is as the full moon.
No more it is my face,
My face is as the round moon.
I pierce through,
As the creamy shoot of the areca leaf,
I come out,
As a bud of the white lily.

Then the charmed leaves are carefully wrapped up, lest the magic virtue should evaporate (*kayawa*), and the

boy washes himself in water. When he is thoroughly cleansed, the wrapping is opened, and the skin rubbed all over and dried with the charmed leaves. At this point the rite takes on its specific character as part of a system of love magic; for the leaves that have been thus used are thrown into the sea, with the words: "*Kirisana akaykakaya, kula kworisaki matana . . .*" (here the girl's personal name is mentioned). The word *kirisana*, also known in the form *kirisala* or *karisala*, signifies the influence which a dream induced by magic may exercise over the seat of the emotions—the heart, as we would say—the belly, as the natives put it.[1] The word might be rendered: "The spell or the influence of a magical act in inducing a dream." The verbal form is *korisaki* with the active suffix *-ki*. The translation of the sentence would, therefore, run as follows: "Dream-spell of my *kaykakaya* charm, go and effectively influence the eye of So-and-so."

Thus the rite has a twofold effect: it makes a man beautiful, as does all washing magic, and it carries sweet dreams about him into the mind of the girl. As the natives put it, referring to the ritual casting of the herbs into the sea: "As the leaves will be tossed by the waves, and as they move with the sea up and down, so the inside of the girl will heave."

What follows depends, as in sorcery, upon the effect of what has already been accomplished. If the loved one surrenders easily, perhaps one more formula will be recited, to attach her affections the more securely. But if

[1] Cf. below, ch. xii, sec. 1.

the washing magic fails completely, another attack is made on the beleaguered heart by means of a stronger magic called the *kasina*. This has to be administered through the mouth. A piece of food or betel-nut—or, to-day, some tobacco—is charmed and given to the girl. The washing magic has already made her more interested in her suitor and, though she is not yet prepared to yield, she will probably ask for some such small gift. In any case, she will not refuse such an offering, even though she suspects that it is given with an ulterior motive.

THE KASINA SPELL

My flashing decoration, my white skin!
I shall take the faces of my companions and rivals;
I shall make them be cast off.
I shall take my face, the face of me (personal name),
And I shall get a flattery-bond for it
For my beautiful full-moon face.

The simile in the last line would not perhaps send a thrill to the heart of a white girl, but the full moon, for the Trobriander, is a symbol of colour and of roundness in a more emotionally appealing sense than it is with us. The "flattery-bond" (*tilewa'i*) has already been explained above (sec. 3).

When the girl has eaten this little *douceur*, the magic enters into her inside and moves her mind. There is a fair chance already that her affections are favourably inclined, but a still more potent magic remains. The first attack, as we saw, was through the ethereal medium of dreams; the second, by the very material way of eating; there remain the two senses of touch and smell. These are considered the most susceptible in love magic.

The next rite, therefore, centres round an aromatic herb called *kwoyawaga*, which grows only in the eastern islands and has to be traded mainly from Kitava. This herb is put into a receptacle with coco-nut oil, and the following spell is chanted over it:

THE KWOYAWAGA SPELL

Spread out, fold up,
Spread out, fold up,
I cut off, I cut, I cut.
A bait for a bird, for a small fish-hawk,
Uve, uvegu-guyo, o!
My *kayro'iwa* love charm remains,
My *kayro'iwa* love charm weeps,
My *kayro'iwa* love charm pulls,
My *kayro'iwa* love charm spills over.
Press down, press upon thy bed;
Smooth out, smooth your pillow-mat;
Enter my house and tread upon my floor.
Tease out and tear out my hair;
Drink my blood and take hold of my penis;
Apicem penis suge, for my guts are moved.

This formula is much more obscure than the previous ones. The first sentence, "spread out, fold up," may refer, as my informants told me, to the mat on which a boy and girl recline in amorous embrace. The cutting, by analogy with similar formulæ, is of the plants to be used in the magic. In the next phrase, the magic is likened to a bait for a bird and the girl to a fish-hawk which hovers over the trap. One sentence I was unable to translate even approximately, and it is therefore given in native. What follows is less cryptic. *Kayro'iwa* is the name of one of the systems of love magic, with which we shall become more intimately acquainted in connection with the native myth of incest (ch. xiv). The last part is typical of the more passionate forms of love magic.

I have obtained several formulæ with similar endings.

I may add that, for every formula which I was able to write down, to check after a few weeks' interval, to get a commentary upon, and to translate into anything like sense, I had to reject several as spurious, fragmentary or not understood by the natives. I was always able to distinguish the genuine archaic formulæ from the corrupt, by the method of checking and re-checking them with my original informant, after having allowed an interval of time to elapse after each repetition.

To return to the magic of the *kwoyawaga* herbs, this charmed and prepared aromatic substance can only be used at close quarters. An even more intimate approach to the desired girl has to be effected than is possible with the piece of betel-nut or tobacco of the previous ritual. For some of the aromatic oil must be smeared upon her body, or poured on to her face, or, best of all, applied to her breasts. Thus close physical contact is needed, and for this, opportunities are given in games, in dances, in tribal festivities, and in the rhythmic round called the *karibom*. Only when a boy is very clumsy or shy, or has no opportunity for intimate approach, will he put the oil on a piece of cigarette paper (or, in olden days, on a flower), so that the smoke or scent may enter her nostrils.

There remains still one rite—that of the all-powerful *sulumwoya*, the mint plant, which is the symbol of charm and seduction, the main instrument of attraction in the *kula* (ceremonial exchange), the herb which plays the central part in the myth of the origins of love, and which figures also in the culminating act of love magic. This

ritual would still be performed, even if the magic had been successful at an earlier stage. For *sulumwoya* gives a full and undivided sway over the loved one's heart. *Boge bipayki kumaydona, magila yakida*, "Already she will refuse all others; her desire is only for us." This is the formula of the *sulumwoya* magic in the *kayro'iwa* system.

SULUMWOYA SPELL

O, her sensual excitement!
O, her erotic swoon!
O, desire, O feminine swoon!
My clasping, thy clasping, kindle our erotic swooning!
My embraces, thy embraces, kindle our erotic swooning!
My copulation, thy copulation, kindle our erotic swooning!

The same complicated phrasing is repeated with a number of words inserted instead of clasping, embracing and so forth. The words are: horizontal motion (*bilabala*), horizontal repose (*bilamapu*), erotic scratching (*kimali*), erotic biting (*kayalu*), nose rubbing (*vayaulo*), and eyelash biting (*mitakuku*), lousing (*kopokutu*), rubbing each other's lips (*kawidova*). Then come the following sentences:

My going first, thy following, kindle our erotic swooning,
My waiting, thy waiting, kindle our erotic swooning.

and finally:

Thou goest my way, crying for me,
Thou enterest my house, smiling at me.
The house is shaken with joy, as thou treadest my floor.
Tease and tear out my hair,
Drink my blood,
So that my feelings are glad.

This is a long formula—the longer since, as in all Trobriand magical spells, the middle part, the litany, is

always repeated over and over again, and not necessarily in the same order. It is chanted over a mint plant boiled in coco-nut oil. If the magic is practised on someone whose love has already been captured, there is no difficulty in spilling the scented and charmed oil over her, or anointing her with it. If she is not yet subdued, the problem remains of entering her hut at night, and spilling some of it below her nostrils, so that she may dream of the magic maker. But if this is achieved the spell is irresistible.

Less certain methods are to smear the oil over her hands, or bring some of it near to her face; or to take a sweet-smelling sprig of herbs, dip it in the oil and flick it under her nose. These three methods obviously make her cognizant that love magic is being employed; and this produces the desired effect—psychologically at least, if not magically!

As an additional charm, the same formula may be recited over the long spine of a fish called *umlaybasi*, a prick from which inflicts a lasting and smarting pain. Holding it in the hollow of his hand, the boy brings his lips close to his hand and chants the spell into it, after which the spine may be put into the stopper of the coco-nut bottle in which the oil is being kept. Or else, holding it in the hollow of his hand, the boy may stab the girl with his finger in the ribs or thereabout; or, during the *karibom*, he may make one of those even more intimate insertions already mentioned (ch. ix, sec. 3).

8

THE REALITIES OF LOVE MAGIC

A direct and consecutive statement of a complex and somewhat chaotic subject such as that of love magic inevitably suggests more precision and system than actually exists, especially when the component parts hang together, at least in theory. And it is well to realize that actual proceedings are never as complete and well defined as might appear from native statements.

A certain amount of complication is introduced by the fact that there are a number of different systems. The most famous one is that of *Kayro'iwa.* But the systems of *Kwoygapani* and *Libomatu,* from the islands of Vakuta and Kayleula respectively, are also prominent. These systems, being perhaps the most widely known and practised, have now become mixed up and few natives have a complete set of formulæ belonging to the same system. As a matter of fact, only a few of my informants, even among those who boasted of having a powerful set of formulæ, could go through a full set satisfactorily. Each knew two or three or only one spell. I may add that perhaps no native in the Trobriands would be able to judge magical texts as well as myself. For no human memory is a match for a written comparative collection. Towards the end of my field-work, I found little difficulty in deciding whether a spell recited to me was genuine or corrupt; and, in the latter case, whether it was deliberate deception, self-deception, or deception on the part

of my informant's predecessor, or just lack of memory.

What matters to us is that few natives are in possession of a full system in an unadulterated form. A youth who knows his spell or two—sometimes only a fragment—will as a rule genuinely believe that there is a great deal of virtue in it; very often experience strengthens his belief. He will recite his fragment or his full charm over the *kaykakaya* leaves, and if unsuccessful he will try his formula over the other herbs.

Each rite has a certain positive effect on him and usually also on his sweetheart. The washing magic gives him the conviction of increased strength and power to attract, an attitude very favourable to his enterprise. The same magic makes him hope that the girl has dreamed of him, and that she is ready to receive his advances. He approaches her with confidence, and jokes with her without embarrassment.

The other rites afford a still more material help in love-making. All of them imply a direct contact; a gift, an erotic touch, the wafting of some scent. Thus not only does he believe in his magical powers, but she also is made aware that he is working on her heart. And she also is susceptible to the influence of belief and tradition. If he is hopelessly repulsive to her, this need not shatter her belief in love magic. She concludes that his rites are spurious and his formulæ badly recited. But if he has the least attraction for her, it is easy to see how magic will do its work.

These conclusions are based on observation of native behaviour, on statements of natives, and on the actual

working of love magic in cases analysed to me by my friends as they were proceeding.

The deep conviction of the natives in the virtue of love magic and their belief that it is the only means of wooing, have already been mentioned. All a man's hopes of success, his boasting and his anticipations are based on confidence in his magical equipment, exactly as all failure is attributed to lack or impotence in this respect. I have already several times alluded to Gomaya: vain, arrogant, and wilful, yet with remarkable personality. He always used to vaunt his success with women, and invariably in terms of magic. He would say: "I am ugly, my face is not good-looking. But I have magic, and therefore all women like me." He would then boast of his intrigues with Ilamweria, of the attachment that his cross-cousins had for him, and of other amorous successes, some of which have already been mentioned in this volume. My other informants were one and all agreed in their conviction of the potency of love magic. To a direct question I would always receive the same answer: "If one man is good-looking, a good dancer, and a good singer, and he has no magic; while the other man is ugly, lame, and dark-skinned, but has good magic; the first will be rejected, the second will be loved by women."

This, of course, is exaggeration for the sake of emphasis, typical of a Melanesian's way of presenting matters. All natives know the magic, yet not all by any means have the same success. Met by such an argument, the natives will say that the man who has success has it because his magic is "keen and strong." And here the

fiction of native belief comes nearer to reality. A man of intelligence, of strong will, personality, and temperament, will have greater success with women than a beautiful but soulless dullard—in Melanesia as in Europe. A man who is convinced that he is going the right way to work; a man who has the energy to find out who has the best magic and the industry to acquire and learn it, such a man will be good at love-making as well as at magic. The native belief thus expresses some truth, though it is psychological rather than physical or occult, and refers to results rather than to mechanism.

Gomaya was a case in point. The five sons of To'uluwa and Kadamwasila were all pleasant and clever, attractive and enterprising, and were all renowned for their love magic. As a matter of fact, the first and last of the formulæ here given I received from Yobukwa'u who, knowing only two out of the four charms, yet achieved an incestuous love-affair with his father's youngest wife, several adulteries, and two engagements one after the other. All these affairs were attributed to love magic; as was the case with Kalogusa, his younger brother, who subdued Yobukwa'u's fiancée, Isepuna. Another of the five brothers, Gilayviyaka, with whose intrigues too we are already acquainted, was also reputed to be an expert at love magic. Many more examples could be adduced, but it is better to keep to the more notorious cases.

Bagido'u, the nephew and heir-apparent of the principal chief, an extremely intelligent and pleasant informant, was ill of some internal wasting sickness, probably tuberculosis. We have already heard of his domestic

mishaps, the defection of his handsome wife, who left him in order to join her late sister's husband, Manimuwa, a young, healthy and handsome man of Wakayse (see ch. vi, sec. 1). She often visited her sister, and during the latter's last illness she stayed for a long time with her brother-in-law. The issue was obvious: Manimuwa and Dakiya formed an attachment and entered upon an illicit intrigue, which ended in her joining him. Magic was blamed for all the trouble. Even Bagido'u himself, the deserted husband, would say that she was a good woman, but that this bad man had first performed evil magic to estrange her from her husband, and afterwards love magic to seduce her. Dakiya, in fact, was quoted as the classical instance of the power of magic. "Magic made the mind of Dakiya; Manimuwa only remains in her mind." The comic side of this otherwise sad story was that Bagido'u had the reputation of being the greatest expert in the magic of love. Of course, my informants were ready with explanations of the theoretical conundrums involved.

Finally to return once more to a story which is a case in point: the tragedy of Namwana Guya'u's expulsion from the village by the kinsmen of Mitakata (see ch. i, sec. 2). On my return after more than a year's absence from the Trobriands, I met Namwana Guya'u in one of the southern villages. His hatred of Mitakata was as implacable as ever. When I asked him what had happened to his enemy, he told me that the wife of Mitakata, Orayayse, had rejected him (see pl. 25). She was, as a matter of fact, the first cousin of her husband's enemy, and I knew that her husband had sent her away for

political reasons. But Namwana Guya'u hinted that he had estranged her feelings from her husband by magic. Then he enlarged on the bad habits of his enemy. "He tries to get hold of girls and they refuse him"; yet he had to inform me that Mitakata had married Ge'umwala, a young and pretty girl. "*Boge, ivakome minana; magila imasisi deli; m'tage biva'i, ipayki—matauna ibi'a.*" "Already he gave magic to her to eat; her desire to sleep together; but to marry she refused—he took her by force." Here then the value of the success was actually minimized by its attribution to love magic; and the consent to marriage, which cannot be won by any such impersonal means, was denied to his enemy by Namwana Guya'u!

9

THE MAGIC OF OBLIVION

In the Trobriands all positive magic has a negative counterpart, in belief and theory at least, if not always in reality. The magic of health and disease is the clearest example, for, against every rite and spell which produces disease, there is a counter-magic which cures it. The positive magic of success, which accompanies each economic enterprise, always implies the existence of a negative preventive rite, which accounts for the possibility of failure in positive magic.

So it is not surprising to find that love-charms have to contend with a magic which acts in the opposite direction. This is the magic of estrangement and oblivion, a department of black magic, generically called *bulubwalata*,

though in its narrower meaning this term designates just this magic. The root *bulu* on which the word is built is also the formative element "pig" (*bulukwa*). Whether this means that the prototype of all this magic consists of the rites which aim at the dispersion of pigs by malicious magic, I was unable to decide. The fact is, however, that this magic is used for sending away pigs into the bush as well as for estranging wives and sweethearts.

Whenever a man has reasons for hating a girl or, even more often, her paramour or her husband, he will practise this magic. It acts upon her mind, and turns away her affections from her husband or lover. She leaves his house, leaves her village, and wanders away. The informant who gave me the following spells told me that when the magic is administered in a mild form, the girl will leave her husband or lover, but return to her own village and her own people; but if it is given in a large quantity, and properly, with minute observation of accuracy in spell and rite and in the taboos, she will run away to the bush, lose her road, and maybe disappear for ever. In this, as in other types of magic, the man might recite the initial spell only in order to produce a partial effect, that is to alienate the girl's feelings from her sweetheart or husband.

The following formula has to be said over a piece of food, or some tobacco, or some betel-nut, which is then given to the victim. It is called *kabisilova* (literally "causing to reject"), and may be freely translated as follows:

His name be extinguished, his name be rejected;
Extinguished at sunset, rejected at sunrise;
Rejected at sunset, extinguished at sunrise.
A bird is on the *baku,*
A bird which is dainty about its food.
I make it rejected!
His mint-magic, I make it rejected.
His *kayro'iwa* magic, I make it rejected.
His *libomatu* magic " " "
His copulation magic " " "
His horizontal magic " " "
His horizontal movement " "
His answering movement " "
His love dalliance " " "
His erotic scratching " " "
His caresses of love " " "
His love embraces " " "
His bodily embracing " " "
My *kabisilova* spell,
It worms its way within you,
The way of the earth heap in the bush gapes open,
The way of the refuse heap in the village is closed.

In the opening lines there is a play upon two words, both of which contain the root of the verbs "to extinguish" and "to reject." The spell begins, therefore, with an anticipation of its primary effect. It goes on to invoke oblivion openly and in detail: all caresses are to be forgotten. Two lines follow to give power to the spell, that it may insinuate itself into the mind of the girl, and worm its way into all her thoughts. Finally the jungle is opened to the girl and the way to the village closed.

The following spell, obtained from the same informant, was said to be a stronger instalment of this magic. It is administered in the same way, or else it is said over some leaves and coco-nut husk, which are then burnt above a fire, so that the evil-smelling smoke may enter the nostrils of the girl to be bewitched. Freely translated it runs:

Woman, woman repelled,
Man, man repelled,
Woman, woman refusing,
Man, man refusing.
She is repelled, she refuses.
Thy man, thy sweetheart, startles and frightens you,
Swear at him, by his sister;
Tell him, "Eat thy filth."
Thy road is behind the houses
His face disappears.
The way of the earth heap in the bush gapes open,
The way of the refuse heap in the village is closed.
His face disappears;
His face vanishes;
His face gets out of the way;
His face becomes like that of a wood-spirit;
His face becomes as that of the ogre Dokonikan.

There falls, forsooth, a veil over thy eyes
The evil magic comes,
It covers completely the pupils of the eyes.
His mint-magic is as nought,
His love-magic is as nought,
His erotic scratchings are as nought,
His love caresses are as nought,
His copulations are as nought,
His horizontal movement is as nought,
His movement in response is as nought,
His bodily relaxing is as nought.

The first period of the spell is then repeated up to the words "she is repelled, she refuses," and it then concludes:

Thy sun is westering, thy sun goes down.
Thy sun is westering, thy sun shines aslant.
She is cut off, she goes far away,
She goes far away, she is cut off.

The only point in this formula which may need explanation is the sentence inviting the girl to swear by his sister at her husband. Such abuse is one of the deadliest offences, and especially so between husband and wife. We shall speak about it in chapter xiii.

Although the magic of the *bulubwalata* is negative in regard to love magic, yet the evil done by it cannot be

undone by love formulæ. But if a man, in passing anger, should have done great injury to a home by practising this evil magic, there is, within its own system, a possible remedy in the "fetching back" formula, the *katuyumaya-mila* (*katuyumali*—an archaic form of *ka'imali*, the ordinary form for "return, give back"). This formula has to be spoken in the open, *owadola wala* ("just in the mouth"), as the natives say. But the magician has to recite it towards the various points of the compass successively, so that the magical virtue may reach the woman wherever she may be wandering in the bush. This formula also begins by a play on words containing the formative roots of the verbs "to make up" and "to attract." Then follows:—

May my *bulubwalata* be blunt!
May my fetching magic be keen!
I am fetching back!
From the north-eastern quarter, I am fetching back;
From the south-eastern quarter, I am fetching back;
From the jungle of Ulawola, I am fetching back;
From the jungle of Tepila, I am fetching back;
The one who is like a woodsprite, I am fetching back;
From the stone heaps, I am fetching back;
From the boundary stone walls, I am fetching back;
From the fern thickets, I am fetching back;
With the smell of mint magic, I am fetching back;
I am fetching back thy mind, O woman!
Come back to us-thy-mother.
Come back to us-thy-father.
Tear open the house,
Tease and tear off my hair,
Tread on my floor,
And lie on my bed,
Come and pass over the threshold,
Come and remain at thy dung-heap,
Let us continue to dwell together,
Within our house.

Here the intention of the opening sentences is clear, the evil magic is to be impotent, the good magic effective.

The truant is called back from the several points of the compass and from the two parts of the jungle (Ulawola and Tepila), one in the North and the other in the South, which, surrounded by marshes (*dumia*), are perhaps the most inaccessible spots in the main island of the Trobriands, and are regarded as the home of the bush pig. The last part, as the reader has probably noticed, is built on the same pattern as the formula of the love magic. The compound words "us-thy-mother," "us-thy-father" are constructed with the inclusive dual possessive *ma*. Thus by the magical virtue of this charm the man and woman should not only be as husband and wife should be to one another in the conjugal house, but as the father and mother in the parental home also.

This formula is said to be very powerful, and to have restored married happiness to scores of broken households.

With the pious hope that this is true we may conclude the present chapter.

CHAPTER XII

EROTIC DREAMS AND FANTASIES

So far we have studied the psychology of sex as it is embodied in stereotyped behaviour; that is, in customs, institutions, and in magic. In short, in order to gauge his attitude towards sex, we have studied how a Trobriander acts. Now we must turn to such manifestations of sexual ideas and feelings as are to be found in dreams, day-dreams, and folk-tales; that is, in his free and set fantasies about the past, about the future, about distant countries, and above all about his life in the next world.

This chapter will be simply a record of collected data, but even such records are inevitably made with certain problems in view and are influenced by the mental attitude of the recorder. Some academic pedants are apt to contemn any signs of a wider knowledge or of intelligence on the part of an observer of fact. Theory should be eliminated from field-work, so they say; but to my mind this is mere intellectual hypocrisy, under the cloak of purism. The observations which I have made were not recorded by some mechanical device or apparatus, but were made with my own eyes and ears, and controlled by my own brain. The trick of relevant observation consists, in fact, in this very control. It is quite inevitable that my field-work should have been affected by my ideas,

interests, and even prejudices. The honest way is to state them so that they may be more easily detected and, if it appears necessary, discounted and eliminated. The other way is to conceal them as skilfully as possible.

The observations to be recorded in this chapter were mostly done before my psycho-analytic interest was stimulated. In my earlier work, I looked upon folk-lore as a direct expression of social and cultural conditions. When I found a certain motive, such as that of incest or breach of exogamy, in folk-lore, I felt that it was puzzling, but I did not see that it was significant. I treated it as an exception which confirms the rule, rather than as a clue to further inquiry into typical social taboos and repressions. I paid little attention to the investigation of dreams, of day-dreams, and of free fantasies. It did not take me long to see that dreams did not play the part among the Trobrianders ascribed to them by Tylor and others, and after that I did not trouble much more about them.

Later only, stimulated by some literature sent to me by Dr. C. G. Seligman and by his advice, did I begin to test Freud's theory of dreams as the expression of "repressed" wishes and of the "unconscious," as the *negative* of acknowledged and official principle and morality. In doing this, I came upon important correlations between folk-lore and fancy on the one hand, and social organization on the other; and was able to discover certain undercurrents of desire and inclination running counter to the established order of ideas and sentiments, which appear, on the surface, insignificant and capricious, but which are

in reality of great sociological importance.[1] That in the course of my inquiry I had to reject far more of psychoanalytic doctrine than I could accept does not in any way diminish my obligation; and my results showed beyond all doubt how even a theory which has, in the light of investigation, to be partly rejected can stimulate and inspire.

The source of illicit feelings and inclinations is to be found in the social taboos of a community. And the failure, indeed the explicit disinclination, of psychoanalysts to take social organization seriously, stultifies almost completely their own application of their doctrine to anthropology.[2]

Though no reference will be made to these points in what follows, it was fairer to indicate them at the start, as they have played some part in the discovery and a considerable part in the presentation of the material given in this and in the following chapters.

I

DREAMS

Spontaneous dreams are not of any great importance in the life of the Trobrianders. On the whole the natives appear to dream but seldom, have little interest in their dreams, and do not often tell their experiences on waking or refer to dreams in order to explain a belief or justify

[1] Part of my results I have published in the two books on *Crime and Custom* and *Sex and Repression.*

[2] The reader will find this argument substantiated in my *Sex and Repression.*

a line of conduct. No prophetic meaning is ascribed to ordinary dreams, nor is there any system or code for their symbolic interpretation.

Our interest is mainly in sexual and erotic dreams; but, in order to understand these, it is necessary to form some idea of the native's attitude to dreams in general. And at the outset it must be understood that by "ordinary" or "free" dreams, I mean spontaneous visions arising in sleep, in response to physiological stimuli, to moods and emotional experiences, to memories of the day and of the past. Such is the material of the dreams which come to every human being, and they play, as I have said, a small part in Trobriand culture, and are apparently rare and easily forgotten.

Quite another class of dreams are those which are prescribed and defined by custom. These are expected of certain people by virtue of their position or of some task that they have undertaken, as a consequence of magic which they have performed, or which has been performed upon them, or of the influence of spiritual beings. Such stereotyped or standardized dreams are expected, hoped for, and awaited; and this might easily account for the frequency of their occurrence and for the ease with which they are remembered.

It should be noted that the distinction between free and standardized dreams is not made in native terminology nor even formulated in native doctrine. But as will presently be seen, it is embodied in behaviour and in the general attitude towards dreams.

In standardized dreams, a prominent part is played by

visions of departed spirits. They appear to people in sleep under appropriate circumstances and at certain seasons. This is in fact one of the chief ways in which they manifest their existence to the living. But not all dreams about the departed are regarded as true. The appearance may be either a *sasopa* (lie, illusion) or a real *baloma* (spirit). Real spirits always come with a purpose and under conditions in which they can properly be expected. Thus if a recently dead person appears in sleep to a surviving relative, giving him some important message or announcing his death at a distance—such a dream is true. Or when a well-known seer or spiritistic medium is visited in his sleep and next day announces the message he has received, no one doubts the reality of his vision. Or when people go to the island of Tuma and there dream of dead relatives, no doubt exists in the native mind that these really have appeared to them. Or again, in the moon of *milamala,* when the spirits of the dead return to the villages, they will appear to the headman, or to some other notable person, in his sleep and convey to him their wishes. Several such nocturnal visits occurred during my residence in the Trobriands.[1] At times a substitution will take place, as when an old woman appeared to her son and told him that she was dead, while, in reality, it was the mother of another boy working on the same plantation who had died in the distant Trobriands. But there are also visions of dead friends and relatives who tell untrue things, announce events which never

[1] Cf. my article in the *Journ. of the R. Anthrop. Inst.,* 1916, sec. 3, pp. 362 *sq.*

happened, or behave in an unseemly manner. Such dreams are not caused by spirits, who, say the natives, have nothing to do with them; and they are not true.

Another important type of dream in which spirits play a part are those which are initiated by some condition in the dreamer. Whereas in visitations at the *milamala*, or from the spirit island of Tuma, or directly after the death of some person, it is the recently deceased who are seen, in this other class of dreams ancestral spirits of old standing are active. Thus when a child is to be born (see ch. viii), the spirit of an ancestress appears and announces the coming incarnation. More important are the visits of ancestral spirits associated with the art of magic, in which spirits play a considerable part. Many spells begin with a list of persons who have at one time wielded this magic. Such lists of ancestral names are perhaps the most universal feature of Trobriand spells. In certain magical rites, spirits receive offerings of food with a short invocation; in return they show some concern for the aims of the rite and communicate with the magician, thus affecting not only the ritual but also the practical activity which goes with it. For a magician has in most cases not merely to utter the spell and perform the ritual, but also comprehensively to control the practical activity with which his magic is connected.

To put it more concretely: the *ex officio* leader of a *kula* expedition, the traditional organizer of fishing and hunting, the hereditary master-in-charge of the gardens, invariably wields the magic proper to these pursuits. In virtue of both offices, he is credited with deeper knowl-

edge and greater foresight than his associates. For one thing, he is liable, under the control of ancestral spirits, to dream about his enterprise. Thus the master of the gardens, in dreams inspired by his predecessors in office, will learn of impending drought or rain, and he will give advice and orders accordingly. The fishing magician hears from his ancestral spirit of shoals coming through this or that passage in the reef, or swimming along a certain channel on the lagoon, and he will order his team to set out in the morning and to cast their nets at the appropriate spot and hour.[1]

A cynical ethnographer might be tempted to suspect that such prophetic dreams are double-edged: when they come true, this is not only practically useful, but proves the goodwill of ancestors and the validity of magic; when they do not come true, it is a sign that the spirits are angry and that they are punishing the community for some reason, and still the truth of magical tradition is upheld. The dream in any case serves its purpose to the magician. And indeed, in these latter days of disbelief and decay of custom, the spirits have frequent occasion to become angry, and the magician needs all the means at his disposal to vindicate his personal authority and to maintain belief in his powers. But in the old days, as even now in districts with an unimpaired tradition, there was no ques-

[1] Compare the more detailed descriptions of these facts given in other places: for the part played by ancestral spirits in magic, article on "Baloma: The Spirits of the Dead in the Trobriand Islands," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute,* 1916, pp. 384-482; for prophetic dreams, p. 366; for *milamala* dreams, p. 379; for pregnancy dreams, chap. vii of this book and "Baloma," pp. 406-18; for the psychology of magical filiation and the relation between magic and myth, *Myth in Primitive Psychology,* and chap. xii of *Argonauts of the Western Pacific.*

tion of made-up dreams. In any case they were not born of anxiety for his own position, but of care for the success of the enterprise he was controlling. The garden magician, the head fisherman, the leader of an expedition, identifies himself to a great extent in ambition, in hope, and in effort, with the communal interest. He is extremely keen that all should go well, that his village should surpass all others, that his ambition and pride should be justified and win the day.

There are also dream revelations connected with the black magic by which disease and death are produced. Here it is the victim who has the vision, and, in fact, this is one of the ways of detecting which sorcerer, by evil spells and rites, has caused his illness. Since the sick man always suspects one or other among his enemies of practising or of purchasing sorcery, it is no wonder that such dreams reveal a culprit. However, they are naturally not regarded as "subjective," but as a by-product of the evil magic.

Yet another class of dreams, to which allusion has already been made (ch. xi, sec. 7), is the dream induced by magic not indirectly and secondarily, but as its main effect. The natives have a definite theory of magic acting through dreams upon the human mind. In connection with the half-commercial, half-ceremonial exchange of the *kula*, the magic of compulsion to generosity (the *mwasila*) will be performed, and this acts upon the mind of the other party to the transaction. Although distant hundreds of miles and separated by stormy seas and reefs, the latter will be visited by the "dream response"

(*kirisala*) of this magic. He will dream agreeably and benevolently of the magic maker, his mind (*nanola*) will soften towards him, and he will be generous in his preparation of gifts.[1]

Some forms of love magic described in the previous chapter are based on the same assumption. Erotic dreams (*kirisala*) are the response to certain charms. Dreams of a sexual or erotic nature are in fact always attributed to magic. A boy or girl dreams of a person of the opposite sex; this means that this person has performed love magic. A boy dreams that a certain girl enters his house, speaks to him, approaches him, lies beside him on the mat, though before she had been unwilling to talk to him or even to look at him. Her shyness has been only pretence. All the time she was preparing or even performing magic. In the dream, she is loving and submissive; she permits all caresses and the most intimate approach. The boy wakes up: "It is all an illusion (*sasopa*, literally, a lie)," he thinks. "But no, there is seminal fluid spilt over the mat." The girl, in her dream-form, has been there. He knows that she makes magic for him and already is half-inclined to pursue her. This is an account, noted down partly in native as it was given to me, from the man's point of view; but an analogous dream would come to a girl. It is characteristic that the dream takes place, not in the mind of the performer, but in that of his victim.

A married man would try to conceal such visitations

[1] I am afraid I have not made this point quite clear in *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* (cf., however, pp. 102, 202, 203, 360, and 361). Most spells of the *kula* magic act at a distance upon the partner's mind, even as they are recited at home.

from his wife, for she would be angry because he had had congress in dreams with another woman. Also she would know that the other woman had made magic and would be specially watchful, so that the man would find it difficult to follow up the dream intrigue.

One very important class of erotic dreams are those of an incestuous nature. There are, however, serious difficulties in the way of any inquiry about them. Free and easy as these natives are, by custom and convention, in most sexual matters, they become extremely sensitive and prudish whenever their specific sexual taboos are touched upon. This is especially true of incest taboos, and above all of that one concerning the brother-sister relation. It would have been quite impossible for me to inquire directly into the incestuous dream experiences of any of my informants; but even the general question, whether incestuous dreams occurred, would be met with indignation or vehement denial. Only by dint of very gradual and guarded inquiry among my most trustworthy informants, was I able to find out that such dreams do occur and that, in fact, they are a well-known nuisance. "A man is sometimes sad, ashamed and ill-tempered. Why? Because he has dreamed that he had connection with his sister," and "This made me feel ashamed," such a man would say. The fact that the incestuous dream, especially as between brother and sister, occurs frequently and disturbs the minds of the natives considerably, accounts in part for the strong emotional reaction to any inquiry into the subject. The lure of "forbidden fruit," which everywhere haunts men in dreams and day-dreams, suggests inces-

tuous motives in Trobriand folk-tales and has for ever associated love and the magic of love with the myth of incest (ch. xiv).

It is important to note that, as we shall see presently, even incestuous erotic dreams are excused on the ground that some magic has been misapplied, accidentally misdirected, or wrongly performed with regard to the dreamer.

We are now in a position to formulate more precisely the native attitude towards dreams. All true dreams are in response to magic or to spiritual influence, and are not spontaneous. The distinction between free or spontaneous dreams on the one hand and stereotyped dreams on the other, corresponds roughly to the native distinction between dreams which are *sasopa* (a lie or illusion), and those which are induced by magic or spirits—that is, are true, relevant and prophetic; or again to the difference between dreams which come without, and those which come with an *u'ula* (cause or reason). While the natives do not attach much importance to spontaneous dreams, they regard the others as of the same substance as magical influence and as possessing a reality comparable to that of the spirit world. The inconsistencies and lacunæ in their beliefs about dreams are similar to those found in their ideas of an after-life in a disembodied state. Most conspicuous in their belief, perhaps, is the view that magic first realizes its effect in dreams which, by influencing the mind, can thus bring about objective changes and events. Thus all "true" dreams may be actually prophetic.

Another interesting link between dreams and the mys-

tical doctrine of the Trobriander is the recurrence of clairvoyant visions in myths and folk-tales—a subject only to be touched on here. Thus we shall see in the myth of the origins of love, that the man from Iwa is led to discover the tragic double suicide and the magical spray of mint by a dream of what has occurred in the grotto. In a myth about the origins of sorcery, a brother sees in a dream that his sister has been killed by the primeval crab-wizard. In a folk-tale to be related presently, about the snake and the two women, a man from Wawela dreams of the distressed maiden and comes to her rescue. In other folk-tales, events happening in a different place are visualized, or a rhyme sung at a distance acts as a spell and produces day-dreams.

It is clear that dream, day-dream, magical incantation, realization by ritual and mythological precedent are welded into an interlocking system of self-confirmatory realities. Dreaming is conceived as one of the real manifestations of magic, and, as it is a definite personal experience, it brings home the efficacy of the specific magic employed. It is thus an important empirical link in the doctrine of magical efficiency and of mythological reality, one which should not be overlooked if we want to understand the psychology of belief among the Trobrianders.

The subject of dreams in general, and erotic dreams in particular, throws valuable light on the natives' flow of imagination and desire. The psychology of their dreams is closely parallel to that of romantic love and of "falling in love." In native tradition and official doctrine we find a distrust of spontaneous and free elements, of untram-

melled and unprescribed impulses in conduct. Similarly we find that the legitimate and true in dreams is always due to some definite motive, once for all laid down by tradition; and among the motives by far the most important is magic.

That this official view does not cover the facts, that it is not completely true to them, is obvious. In dreams as in romantic love and love impulse, human nature breaks through and flatly contradicts dogma, doctrine, and tradition. Incestuous dreams are the best example of this. Established doctrine in the Trobriands as elsewhere makes use of man's susceptibility to authoritative suggestion, and of his tendency to be impressed by positive instances and to forget negative ones. It first makes the distinction between true and false dreams; then minimizes, explains away, or forgets contradictory instances, while using all confirmatory ones as further proof of its validity. Thus incest, whether in myth, reality, or dream, is always explained by an accidental misuse of magic. This motive is as clear and prominent in the Trobriand story of incest as in our own myth of Tristan and Isolde.

2

SEX IN FOLK-LORE—STRING FIGURES

In passing to the expression of sex in folk-lore, we must bear in mind that Trobriand manners do not ban sex as a subject for conversation, save in the presence of certain tabooed relatives, and Trobriand morals do not condemn extra-marital intercourse, except in the forms of adultery

and incest. The attraction of the subject and its piquancy is not due, therefore, to the feeling that it is socially and artificially forbidden. And yet there is no doubt that the natives regard bawdiness as "improper"; that there is a certain strain about it, barriers to be broken and a shyness to overcome and a corresponding enjoyment in getting rid of the strain, breaking the barriers and overcoming the shyness.

It follows from this emotional attitude that sex is seldom treated crudely and brutally; that there is a considerable difference in the manner and tone adopted towards it by, for instance, a coarse fellow of low rank who has no social dignity to maintain, and the descendant of chieftains who touches sexual subjects, but touches them lightly, with refinement, subtlety, or wit. In short, manners exist in this matter and are socially valued and graded according to rank. Sex, like excretory functions and nudity, is not felt or regarded as "natural," but rather as naturally to be avoided in public and open conversation, and always to be concealed from others in behaviour; hence, to repeat, the "improper" interest in occasional infringements.

Folk-lore, the systematized forms of oral and intellectual tradition, includes significant games and sports, carving and decorative art, folk-tales, typical sayings, jokes, and swearing. In the Trobriands, representations of sexual matters are completely absent from decorative art and from dancing. The only exceptions to this rule are to be found in certain artistically inferior modern productions, invented under the decomposing influence of

European culture, though not in any way influenced by European patterns. Dancing and decorative art, therefore, do not fall within our scope. For the rest, sexual elements in games and sports have already been discussed, sex in joking and swearing will be dealt with in the next chapter, and there remain, for our present consideration, sexual folk-tales and the bawdy figures and sayings connected with "cat's-cradles."

String figures or cat's-cradles (*ninikula*) are played by children and adults in the day time during the rainy months from November to January, that is, in the season when the evenings are passed in reciting folk-tales. On a wet day, a group of people will sit under the overhanging roof of a yam house or on a covered platform and one will display his skill to an admiring audience. Each set of figures has a name, a story, and an interpretation. Some also have a ditty (*vinavina*), which is chanted while the artist evolves and manipulates the figure. Many sets are completely devoid of sex interest. Among the dozen or so which I have recorded the following ones show pornographic details.[1]

In *kala kasesa Ba'u* (the clitoris of Ba'u) the performer, after preliminary manipulations, produces a design (Diagr. A, in Fig. III) in which two large loops are formed in the main plane of the figure, while at the bottom of each, a smaller loop sticks out at right angles to the main plane. The large loops each represent a vulva and the smaller ones a clitoris. There is obviously a little

[1] I did not make any attempt to record the technique of cat's-cradles. In each set I merely recorded the significant figure or figures, the meaning and the psychology.

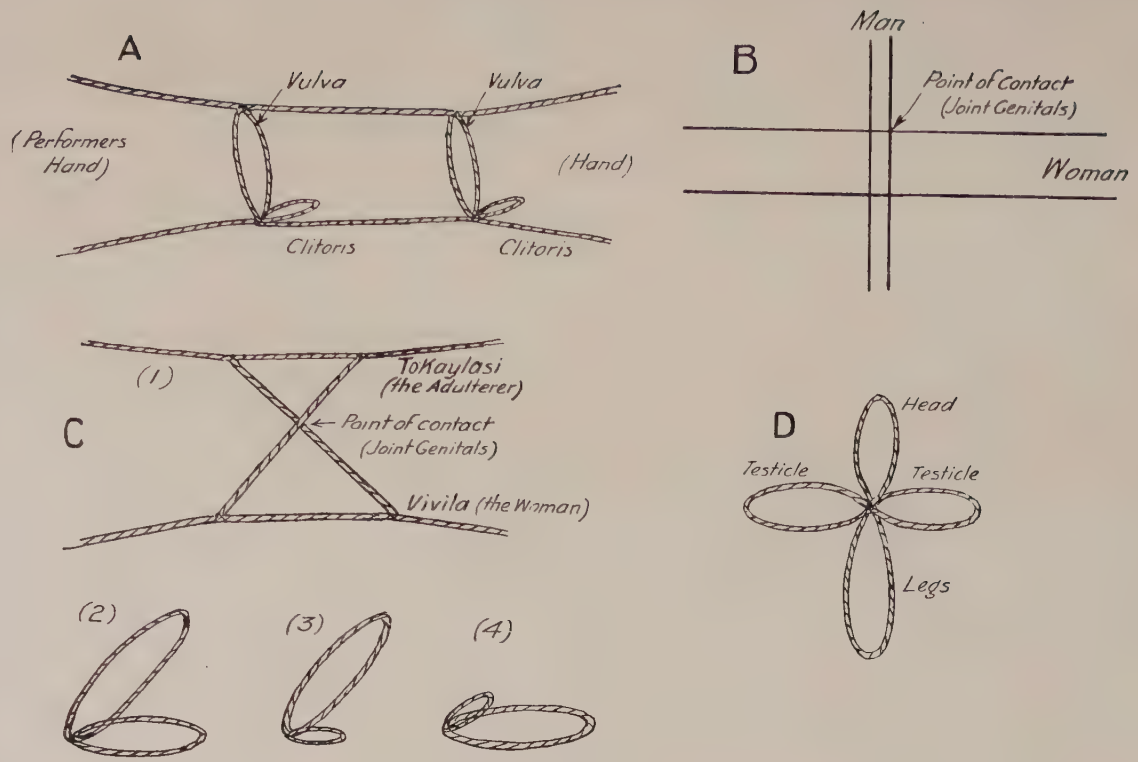


FIG. 3.—CATS'-CRADLES

anatomical inaccuracy in this arrangement, since in nature there is only one organ and in this the clitoris is placed at the top and not at the bottom of the vulva. But, no doubt, Ba'u was an anomaly.

The figure complete, the artist skilfully wriggles his fingers, producing a movement first in one and then in the other of the clitoris loops. While thus engaged, he recites rhythmically, but not without jocular inflections, the following words:

Kala kasesa Ba'u (repeated)
Her clitoris of Ba'u (repeated)
Kam kasesam, kam kasesam, etc.
Thy clitoris, thine, etc.

which might be freely rendered: "Look, that is the clitoris of Ba'u, that is her clitoris. O Ba'u, thy clitoris, O thy clitoris!" The movements and song are repeated a number of times, to the great amusement of both onlookers and artist; then the figure is undone, to a repetition of the words:

Syagara dyaytu dyaytu, Syagara dyaytu dyaytu, etc.

These words are merely onomatopoetic, imitating the rhythmic beat of the drums in dance music. Ba'u is obviously a female personality, but nothing is known of her besides what we learn from this performance. The clitoris is a favourite subject for jokes, stories, and allusions. It is often used in *pars pro toto* figures of speech and is regarded as a specially attractive and funny detail in the female organism.

A short set, entitled with some directness and simplicity "copulation" (*kayta*), represents this function in a naturally somewhat conventionalized manner. The strings (Diagr. B, in Fig. III) are made to form a double cross, in which the horizontal arm represents the woman and the vertical the man. The strings are then pulled so that the centre loop, which represents the genitals, moves rapidly, up and down, and right and left, and this, to the imagination of the amused onlookers, stands for the characteristic motion in sexual congress. There is no ditty to this set.

Tokaylasi, the adulterer (C, in Fig. III), is a more complicated set and requires both hands, the two big toes and the heels for its composition. The accompanying commentary is just spoken in ordinary prose. The first figure (C, 1) is formed, in its significant section, of two isosceles triangles, one above the other and touching by the apex. These triangles represent the adulterer and the wife engaged in the act of copulation. To indicate this, strings are manipulated so that the point of contact moves up and down, while each triangle in turn increases and decreases in size. At the same time the artist declares in unambiguous language: "This is the adulterer; this is the wife; they copulate." The figure will not be devoid of significance to those acquainted with the native method of copulation described above (ch. x, sec. 12).

The figure is then dissolved to the artist's comment: *tokaylasi bila wa bagula*, "the adulterer goes to the garden." He then adds: *layla la mwala*, "the husband comes"—and by that time the strings form a figure con-

sisting of two loops placed at an angle (C, 2). As these loops begin to move in their turn, each shrinking and expanding (C, 3 and 4), he says placidly: *Ikayta la kwava*, "he has intercourse with his wife." Thus adultery in the Trobriands is represented by two triangles instead of one.

One more cat's-cradle of a purely anatomical character has still to be mentioned. It is named after the hero Sikwemtuya, though this personality has no other claim to fame than his cat's-cradle. Four loops symmetrically disposed around the central point (D, in Fig. III) represent the head, the legs and the two testicles of Sikwemtuya. Then this duologue is sung:

"Sikwemtuya, Sikwemtuya avaka kuvagi?"
"Sikwemtuya, Sikwemtuya what art thou doing?"
"Bayamata la kaybaba guya'u."
"I guard the decorated food of the chief."
"Bagise puwam?"
"May I see your testicles?"

With the last words, one of the testicles begins to enlarge and to move slowly, while Sikwemtuya, through the mouth of the artist, utters a self-satisfied grunting noise, somewhat like *ka ka ka ka* . . . He is then requested to show the other one,

"Tagise piliyuwela,"
"Let's see the other one,"

and answers with the same words, *ka ka ka ka* . . . and a similar exhibition of his second testicle.

I should like to add that the comical effect of the grunting noises, *ka, ka, ka, ka,* is irresistible, and would be as much envied by a modern (and somewhat *risqué*) cabaret artist, as Melanesian or West African carvings and modellings are admired by modern sculptors. But it is very difficult to render linguistic effects and a sense of fun and ribaldry embodied in speech through the medium of another tongue, whereas decorative art, sculpture, and music speak their own universal language.

3

SEX IN FOLK-LORE: FACETIÆ

In the matter of stories, we will begin with the amusing folk-tales (*kukwanebu*) told during the evenings of the rainy season for the entertainment of young and old. They contain accounts of avowedly fantastic and unbelievable events; they are meant to stir the imagination, to pass the time pleasantly, and, above all, to raise a laugh —at times a very ribald laugh.[1] A few of them are entirely devoid of sexual or scatological motives, and can only be touched on here. There is the tale about fire and water, in which fire threatens to burn water, but water touches it and quenches it. There is one in which a greedy crab wants to catch the fruit collected by a grasshopper, but the fruit falls on him and he is killed. A pretty story is told of a beautiful girl who is wooed by the birds. She finds fault with one after another, and

[1] For a more detailed account of the sociological and cultural character of these stories and their relation to other types of folk-lore cf. *Myth in Primitive Psychology.*

finally accepts the smallest and most modest among them. A tale is told of the legendary ogre Dokonikan; his gardens are robbed by a girl who is imprisoned by him and then set free by the youngest of her five brothers; and another describes a contest between the same ogre and a hero. The latter tale is told, in certain districts, not as a myth but as a funny story. A purely gustatory account of two brothers, who, after a time of starvation, over-ate to bursting point, provokes much laughter by its entirely innocent jokes.

Only in one story does the fun turn on defecation: a man sticks to a tree after he has relieved himself, and dies as his relatives try to pull him free. In the tale of the louse and the butterfly, the joke consists in the louse emitting a resounding noise from the rectum, by which explosion he is thrown off the butterfly's back and drowned in the sea.

I will now relate the stories with a sexual motive, giving them in order of increasing ribaldry.

The Snake and the Two Women.—Two sisters go in search of eggs. The younger, in spite of a warning, takes away the eggs of the snake. The mother snake chases the thief through all the villages, and finds her at last roasting the eggs in her own village of Kwabulo. To punish her, the snake enters her body through the vulva, coiling up inside it with only the tail and the nose sticking out. After which, as the natives put it:

ivagi	*kirisala,*	*ikarisaki*	*matala*
it makes	dream response	it induces dream	eye his

Gumwawela
man of Wawela.

In other words, this happening brought about a dream response, it induced a vision before the eyes of a man of Wawela. This man comes to the rescue and, by magic, induces the snake to creep out, when he kills it.

The Two Brothers and the Chief's Wife.—A younger brother goes to a distant chief's garden, meets the chief's wife there and they fornicate under a mango tree. He is caught by the outraged husband, who brings him to the village and places him on a high platform, to await his death. However, his brother rescues him by magic, and makes all the men of that village disappear by the same means; after which the two marry the women and settle down.

The Reef Heron and Ilakavetega.—Ilakavetega is an old woman who lives with her granddaughters. These go to the seashore, where they meet a reef heron who inquires who they are. "We are the granddaughters of Ilakavetega." "Tell her then," answers the bird, and intones:

Kaypwada'u wila,
Full of sores cunnus hers,
kaypilipili wila,
full of small sores cunnus hers,
kaypwada'uyala wila,
sore covered cunnus hers,
kaykumikumi wila:
eaten away by sores cunnus hers:
ibusi kalu momona,
It flows down her discharge,

akanuwasi *yaegu* *bo'i.*
I lap it up myself reef heron.

This somewhat gratuitous insult is repeated in full and with the same sing-song intonation to the grandmother, who accompanies her granddaughters to the seashore next day, meets the reef heron and hears what he has to say for herself; so that his song is chanted three times in the course of the narrative. The heron unfortunately gets entangled among the coral on the reef, and is caught, killed, and eaten, but the interests of poetic justice are served, for a sorcerer kills Ilakavetega and her granddaughters to avenge the death of this amiable and witty bird. Also the sorcerer copulates with each of his victims before killing them.

The Stingaree.—In this story the ribald and dramatic interest are nicely balanced. In the village of Okayboma there lives a woman, mother of five sons, who is endowed with the anatomical anomaly of five clitorises.[1] In the tidal creek of that village dwells a giant stingaree. One day when the boys are out in the taro-garden, the stingaree flops up the mangrove swamp, gets into the village, and enters the house, intoning a ribald and cruel ditty:

O vavari, vavari, *O vavari, vavari,*
Vari to'i, to'i.

Apasisi, *apaneba,*
I cut it sore, I scarify it,

[1] The arithmetical expert will, no doubt, discover that the old lady had six clitorises. I reproduce the native story as it was given me.

magusisi, *magusike'i,*
I want to cut it, I want to cut at it,
oritala wila *inumwaya'i,*
one cunnus hers slackens,
bayadi kala kasesa,
I saw her clitoris,
ba'ilituli, bitotina, biwokwo.
I cut off, it snaps, it is over.

This may be rendered, the onomatopoetic words being repeated as they occur: "*O vavari, vavari, vari to'i, to'i*— I cut it and make a scar of it, I cut it with a will, I like to cut at it, one part of her vulva has got slack, I shall saw off one of her clitorises, I saw it off till it snaps and is gone."

The stingaree then proceeds to business, copulates with the old woman and cuts off one of her multiple appendages. My native informants, in their commentary, affirmed that the *va'i* had a penis; but it seems more likely that those who originally contributed to the making of the story were inspired by the long, saw-edged dart in the middle of the stingaree's tail, which, were it used as a sexual instrument, would certainly have the baleful results described in the story.

The sons come back and the mother complains; so the eldest one offers to protect her next day. But when the stingaree flops along into the village, and when he intones his sadistic ditty, and when this chant, like a magical spell, produces a portent (*kariyala*) in the form of lightning and thunder, the son runs away and the mother is de-

prived of another *kasesa* (clitoris). Nor do the second, third, and fourth brothers behave any better. Four times does the stingaree repeat every word of his ditty and every detail of his behaviour, until the mother is left with but one clitoris, and only the youngest son to defend it and to save her life. For the story assures us that she could not survive the loss of all the five *kasesa.*

The youngest son prepares a number of spears made of strong hardwood, places them all along the road which the cruel fish has to traverse from the creek-head to the house, and then waits in ambush.

When the stingaree appears, he sings his ditty for the last time. Now, however, he sings: "One only, a solitary one clitoris remains. I have come, I shall finish it off; it will be over with her clitorises, she will die." I shall quote the end of the narrative in free translation.

"The stingaree imagines that he will enter the house. The son sits high up, on the raised platform in front of the house. He grasps the spear, he pierces the stingaree. This runs away; the man, however, comes down. He takes the spear made of *se'ulawola* wood, which he had stuck in the areca palm. He throws it, and the impact causes the stingaree to stand up. The next spear has pierced it also. The man runs to the *natu* fruit tree, takes the spear made of *tawaga* wood and throws it. He runs to the mango tree and takes the spear of hard palm wood, he pierces the stingaree's eye. He takes a strong cudgel and hammers the stingaree till it dies." The story ends with the return of the elder brothers who disbelieve the young man's story, until they are convinced by the sight

of the stingaree's corpse. Then the fish is cut up and distributed among those lagoon villages in which it is not, as is usual in the Trobriands, considered an abomination.

The Story of Digawina.—The heroine's name etymologically defines her anatomical peculiarities and her character. The root *diga* means "to fill out," "to pack into"; *wina* is the dialectic and archaic form of *wila*, cunnus. Digawina is endowed with very large and comprehensive genitals. It is her custom to attend the big distributions of food (*sagali*) made after a man has died, and to steal more than her share; packing coco-nuts, yams, taro, areca nuts, betel pods, large chunks of sugar cane, and whole bunches of bananas into her vagina. Thus things mysteriously disappear, to the great annoyance of all others present, and particularly of those who arrange the feast. Her practices are discovered at last. The master of the next distribution conceals a large black mangrove crab (*kaymagu*) among the food, who cuts through her *kasesa* (clitoris) and thus kills her. With this tragic event the story ends.

The White Cockatoo and the Clitoris.—A woman named Karawata gave birth to a white cockatoo, who flew away into the bush. One day Karawata went to the garden, telling her *kasesa* (clitoris) to look after the *kumkumuri* (earth baking oven). The *kasesa* replies confidently: *Kekekeke.* But the white cockatoo has seen everything from the bush; he swoops down and strikes the clitoris, who cries out plaintively: *Kikikiki*, and topples over, while the cockatoo eats the contents of the oven. (It is necessary to imagine the big, flat mound-like earth

oven, the tiny clitoris standing on guard, and the cruel white cockatoo watching sardonically for its chance. The absurdity of the situation appeals to the natives' sense of the ludicrous.)

Next day, Karawata says again to her *kasesa:* "Let us catch pig, get some yams, and bake it all in the earth." Again she takes off her *kasesa,* and leaves it to look after the oven, and the *kasesa* says confidently as before: *Kekekeke.* Again the white cockatoo descends from the branch, strikes the *kasesa,* who, with a plaintive *kikikiki,* topples over; and again the cockatoo eats the contents of the oven. Next day the woman says: "I shall go to garden and you look properly after the food." *Kekekeke,* answers the *kasesa,* but all that happened on the two previous days is repeated, and Karawata and her *kasesa* die of hunger.

Mwoydakema.—This hero sees two women who are going to fetch salt water from the beach. He hails them:

Wo!	*tayyu*	*vivila!*	*Wo!*	*mitakuku,*
Wo!	two	women!	Wo!	nibbled eyelashes,

kada	*mitakuku*	*yoku.*
our (dual)	nibbled eyelashes	thou.

This, in free translation, means:

"Hullo! two women are coming. Hullo! Sweethearts, those with whom I would like to exchange nibbling of eyelashes."

The women answer:

O gala	*ikwani.*
O not	it grips.

Which amounts more or less to our colloquial "Nothing doing."

Mwoydakema then exclaims:

O! kimali kadi kimali yoku,

which means: "O thou, erotic scratching"; in other words: "You with whom I would like to exchange erotic scratches."

The women, however, walk on and leave him to the polishing of his stone axe. But he runs ahead of them to the beach and, by means of a magic ditty, moves the sea, which covers him and leaves him buried in the sand with only the penis sticking out.

The women come upon this solitary object on the beach, and begin to quarrel about to whom it belongs. Finally, one after the other, they bestride it, pulling each other off, and each wanting to enjoy it as long as possible. This to the natives is the most hilarious part of the narrative. After they have gone, Mwoydakema shakes off the sand, runs back to his axe, and hails the women again (almost in the same words) as they walk back from the beach. Next day the same events are repeated, and the women have three turns each at the "stick" (as they call it) on the beach. On the third day the same thing happens again, but after the women have enjoyed the "stick," they conceive the idea of digging it up and taking it home. They gradually discover the various parts of Mwoydakema, till he jumps up and runs away. And when they go back to the village they have to pass him once more, and he teases them with their performances.

Momovala.—Momovala goes with his daughter to the garden and sends her up a tree. He looks up and sees her genitals, and emits the long-drawn *katugogova.* This is produced by giving voice on a high-pitched note, while the sound is interrupted by the rapid beating of the mouth with the hand. It is used to express intense emotional excitement of a pleasant kind. She asks him why he screamed. "I saw a green lory," he answers. The same sequence is repeated, and he mentions another bird, and so on several times over. When she comes down from the tree, the father has already discarded his pubic leaf and is in a state of erection. She is very confused, and weeps. He, however, seizes her, and copulates and copulates. After all is over, she sings a ditty which may be rendered: "*O Momovala, Momovala!* Gut of my gut, father my father. Father by name, he seized me, he brought me, he wronged me." The mother hears her and guesses what has happened. "Already he has got hold of the girl and copulated. I shall go and see."

The mother meets them, the girl complains and the father denies. The girl goes to the seashore with all her belongings, and sings to a shark to come and eat up, first her wooden board for the making of grass skirts, then her basket, then one arm, then the other arm, and so on, interminably singing the same ditty for each object. Finally she sings: "Eat me up altogether," and the shark does so.

At home Momovala asks the mother where the girl has gone, and learns of her tragic death. His answer is to ask the mother to take off her grass skirt and to copu-

late with him. The story describes his horizontal motions, which are so strong that his wife complains: *Yakay, yakay*, an expression of pain. But he only pushes deeper and deeper. She complains again to no purpose. She dies after the act.

Next day people ask him in the garden what has happened. He says that his wife has been speared. "Where?" "In her vagina." Momovala then cuts off his penis and dies.

This is perhaps the cruellest story of my collection.

4

SEX IN FOLK-LORE: LEGEND AND MYTH

Passing from the purely narrative and entertaining fairy tales to more serious forms of folk-lore, we find, in Kwabulo, one of the lagoon villages, a local legend of a pronouncedly sexual character. The story is told in a manner half-way between the serious and the jocular. It is, indeed, a significant legend to the inhabitants, for it is embodied in a famous song, it is associated with the history of their village and it is believed to be true, since certain natural features in the locality witness to its authenticity. Also it contains elements of the tragic, especially in the self-castration of the hero and in his lyric yearning for his distant home. The central theme is ribald, however; and when telling it or referring to it, as they often do, the natives are by no means solemn, but delight to exaggerate and multiply unseemly similes about the crux of the tale, which is the long penis of the

WOMEN IN THE WATER COLLECTING SHELLS

[*Ch. XII*, 4]

HEAD POOL OF THE TIDAL CREEK OF KWABULO

[*Ch. XII*, 4]

hero, the legendary headman of Kwabulo. I shall quote this story, keeping as closely as possible to the native style of narrative.

The Legend of Inuvayla'u

In the village of Kwabulo there lived Inuvayla'u the head of his clan, the Lukuba clan; the head of his village. He copulated with the wives of his younger brothers, of his maternal nephews.

When the men went out fishing, he would stand outside a house, and make a hole in the thatch; he then thrust his penis through the thatch and fornicated. His penis was very long; his penis was like a long snake. He would go into the garden when the women made *koumwala* (clearing the ground from débris preparatory to planting); or when they *pwakova* (weeded the ground). He would stand right away behind the fence, he stood in the uncut bush and his penis wriggled on the ground like a snake. The penis crept along all the way. The penis would approach a woman from behind as she was bending down to her task. It would strike her hard till she fell, and on all fours she would be fornicated with as the penis entered the vulva.

Or when women went to bathe in the lagoon the penis would go under the water like an eel and enter the vulva. Or when they went to collect shells, as women do on the western shore (pl. 80), wading and feeling for them with the toes in the mud of the lagoon, Inuvayla'u would fornicate with them. When the women went to the waterhole, he would smash their coco-nut shell bottles and

fornicate with them. The men were then very angry for they had no water to drink. They would abuse the women. The women would be too ashamed to speak, for their bottles had been broken. One day the men ordered, telling their wives:

"Cook fish, cook *taytu,* make pudding of taro, so that our revered old man eats his fill." "No," answered the women, "we shall not do it; this man does wrong by us; when you go to fish, and we remain in the village, when we work in the garden, by the water-hole, in the lagoon, he does violence to us."

Then the men watched him. They said they were going to fish. They hid in the *weyka* (the thick scrub surrounding the village), they saw: Inuvayla'u stood outside a hut, he made a hole in the thatch; his penis sneaked on the ground, it crept through the hole, it came in: he wronged the wife of his younger brother. The men went to the garden . . . (here the various conditions under which the hero plays his foul pranks on the women are again enumerated, in almost exactly the same words as before).

When his younger brothers, his maternal nephews, saw this, they grew very angry. Next morning they ducked him; they ducked him in the head pool of the tidal creek, which comes up to the village of Kwabulo (pl. 81).

He came out of the water. He returned to his house, his mind was full of shame and of sorrow. He spoke to his mother Lidoya: "Bake some *taytu* and fish. Bake it in the ground. Pack all our belongings and the food in

your big basket; lift it and put it on your head; we shall go, we shall leave this place."

When all was ready, he came out of his house, which stood on the *baku* (central place of the village). He wailed aloud, facing the *baku*. He took his *kema* (axe), he cut at his penis. First he wailed and wailed over it, holding it in his hands. Then he cut off the point of his penis; it came off on the *baku* in front of his house; it was turned into stone. The stone is still there, on the *baku* of Kwabulo in front of the headman's house. He cried and wailed and went on. He stood outside the outer ring of houses, he looked back, he took his penis and wept over it. He struck again with his axe. The second bit fell off and was turned into stone. It can be seen still outside the village in Kwabulo. He cried and wailed and went on. Half-way between the village and the tidal pool of the creek he stopped. He looked back towards the houses. He took his penis into the palms of his hands, he wept over it and cut off another bit. It turned into stone, and can be seen there not far from Kwabulo. He came to the canoes; he looked back towards the village, he wept over his genitals. He took the axe and cut off the remaining stump of his penis. It was turned into stone, and it lies now near where the Kwabulo men moor their canoes. He entered his canoe and punted along. Half-way down the creek he wept once more. He gripped his axe and cut off his testicles. Large white coral boulders (*vatu*) lie in the creek. They are the token: they show where Inuvayla'u cut off his testicles.

Inuvayla'u and Lidoya, his mother, went to Kavataria

(to the north of Kwabulo, a village, from which overseas expeditions are made south). He stole a large *waga* (canoe), a *mwasawa* (sea-going canoe). But the owner caught him and chased them away. They went to Ba'u (a village further north). He took a sea-going canoe; he told his mother Lidoya: "Put in your basket, we shall sail." They sailed, they came to I'uwaygili (a village on Kayleula). He told his mother . . . (here the same words as above are repeated; then they sail again, arrive at another village and again he asks her to put in her basket; and so on, through a monotonous enumeration of the villages along the lagoon and through the Amphlett Islands down to the *koya*, the high mountains on the D'Entrecasteaux Archipelago). Inuvayla'u arrived in the *koya*. There he settled, there he lived, and with him his mother, who helped him to make gardens and cooked his food for him. He went out to fish with a flying kite, and with the deep sea net which has to be sunk far under the water. His mother made gardens on the mountain slope and she made cooking pots for him.

One day he went high up the mountain slope. The day was clear. Far away among the *budibudi* (the small clouds that gather round the horizon in the monsoon season), he saw the large flat island of Kiriwina, he saw the wide lagoon. On its water he saw a canoe, a canoe of Kwabulo, his native village.[1] His inside grew soft

[1] For the strange and impressive contrast between the green waters and white chalk of the Trobriands and the brown volcanic rock, high mountains and deep blue sea of the *koya*, compare *Argonauts of the Western Pacific, passim.* The reader will also find there accounts of the emotional attitude of the natives towards the landscape and further expressions of it in folk-lore.

(*inokapisi lopo'ula*). He wanted to see his village, he wanted to punt among the mangroves of Kwabulo.

They sailed. On the sea they met a boat from Kitava. He tells his mother: "Beg them for *sayaku* (aromatic black paint); beg them for *mulipwapwa* (ornaments of shell)." The mother offered herself to the Kitava men. They copulated with her on their canoe; they gave her some *sayaku* and a few shell ornaments. He had some red paint and some red shell ornament.

On the landing-place at the head of the creek he adorned himself. He went to the village. In his festival adornment he stood on the *baku* (central place), he sang the song which he had composed in the *koya* (southern mountains). He taught the song to the villagers, to his younger brothers, and maternal nephews. He gave them the song and the dance. For all time this has remained the dance and song of the people of Kwabulo. It is danced with the *kaydebu* (dancing shield) (pl. 82). The men of Bwaytalu and of Suviyagila have purchased it and they dance it also. Inuvayla'u lived in his village till he died. This is the end of the story.

I obtained a few variants of this myth by hearing it told in several villages, and also some comments which may be added. The act of expiatory self-castration is sometimes made to take place on Inuvayla'u's return home. This, however, does not tally with the sequence of natural relics. All the stones described in the myth still exist, though the similarity to their anatomical prototypes has worn away with time, while their size must have enormously increased. I have seen the relics several

times, but unfortunately I was always prevented by weather or the time of day or high tide from taking a photograph of the stones. Making the necessary allowances for imagination and latitude in exegesis, there can be no doubt that the testicles are in the creek—large, round boulders just awash at low tide; while the *glans penis*, a pointed helmet-shaped piece of white coral, is in the central place of the village. This disposition confirms the version given in the text.

The etymology of the hero's name indicates his failing; the *inu* is unquestionably the feminine particle *ina*, woman, while the verb *vayla'u* means actually to rob or steal; so that his name can be translated "the thief of woman." To those who believe in the existence of an old-time gerontocracy in Melanesia this myth will be of special interest; for in it we have the old (male) "matriarch" trespassing on the rights of the younger men of his clan and, by means of his enormous organ (the symbol of his greater generative power, a psycho-analyst would say), claiming all the women of the community. Some parts of the story show indisputable signs of greater antiquity, whereas others have obviously been modernized. The simple crudity of the first part and its association with natural features has all the interesting sociological significance of the genuine myth, gradually degenerated into mere legend. The second part, on the contrary, with the song which will be quoted presently, is set in modern and realistic conditions, and its lyrical narrative character stamps it as a tale of more recent origin.

It is characteristic also that, in the first part of the

legend, the women are described as especially open to attack during their specific privileged occupations, when normally a taboo protects them and not only should a man never make love to them but he should not even approach them (see chapter ii, male and female provinces in tribal life). It must be remembered that, while engaged in communal weeding, women are entitled in certain districts to attack any man who approaches them (ch. ix, sec. 8). This is certainly an interesting correlation and might, to an anthropologist endowed with some imagination and a faculty for hypothetical construction, serve as a proof of the antiquity of the myth and furnish a theory as to the custom of *yausa*. By outraging the women when engaged in such occupations as weeding and filling the water-bottles, Inuvayla'u adds insult to injury, and in the legend we see the women more ashamed for the manifest insult to female prerogatives in the broken water-bottles than for their abused chastity. Superficially this breaking of the bottles might appear merely an unpleasant sadistic trait in the otherwise amiable character of Inuvayla'u. In reality, however, all such details are sociologically very significant.

Another slight variant of the legend declares that Inuvayla'u was not allowed to return to his village, but was chased away immediately on his appearance. I prefer to discard this tragic version, partly because Anglo-Saxons do not like sad endings in fiction, partly because it does not harmonize well with the amiable and little vindictive character of the Trobrianders.

The song which is ascribed to the mutilated hero of

171079

Kwabulo is but loosely connected with the story of the myth. The first stanza alludes to his trespasses and their consequences, and the expiatory resolution to go away. The coral outcrop or coral ridge mentioned in the first stanza and the marshy ground through which the hero is made to wander, are poetical images of that part of the legend in which the wanderings of the hero and his mother are described.

The second and third stanza still follow the myth. The part of the mother, the sorrow of the son, and the first stages of the journey are common to both song and legend. But the song, neglecting completely the coarser and perhaps more archaic elements of the myth, does not mention castration. There is only the sorrow for the village left behind and the house abandoned.

To indulge in tentative speculation for another moment: may not the first and second parts of the myth be different stories altogether—the first part, a primitive myth with several interesting sociological hints and implications; the second part and the song, a tale of a real or imaginary man, who, too amorous to be tolerated in the community, was banished from it, and, later, offered in expiation his song and his repentance? In the course of time the two were amalgamated in the legend, but not in the song.

From the fourth stanza on, the song turns on the motives of decoration, of dancing, of personal renown, and of self-glorification; of women admiring the singer's ornaments, of his wandering through the villages and his recurring nostalgia. In all this the song is typical of its

THE INUVAYLA'U DANCE

[*Ch. XII*, 4]

kind in the Trobriands. I am giving only the first six stanzas because I was unable to translate the remaining ones as fully as these.

THE SONG OF INUVAYLA'U

I

One day they ducked Inuvayla'u.
The news of the fornication spread:
He was dipped, he went under, he came out of the water.
He turned and went to the sea—
Through the *raybwag*[1] and *dumia* he went to the sea.

II

"Our mother Lidoya, get together the food,
I turn my eyes to Dugubakiki.[2]
My tears flow at the thought of the *bwaulo*[3] of my village.
My tears flow at the thought of Kwabulo, of the sweet air of Kwabulo.

III

"O mother Lidoya, put your basket on your head."
She goes carefully, she stumbles along the creek.
She has left Kwabulo—the house is closed up.
Inuvayla'u will not fornicate any more.
Thy house is locked up—there is no more Inuvayla'u's house.

IV

"It is put up—the mast at the mouth of the creek.
I seek for my song—I am taking the road—I—Inuvayla'u.
My road is Gulagola which leads to Tuma,
And afterwards the Digidagala road which leads through Teyyava.[4]

V

"Women of Kulumata, dance your dance!
Prepare for a round dance with the *tubuyavi*[5] on your faces!
A *tilewa'i*[6] for you—go then to my village,
Go to Oysayase—to Oburaku!"[7]

[1] *Raybwag*—coral outcrop, coral ridge; *dumia*—swamp marshes.
[2] The landing-place of Kwabulo on the lagoon.
[3] *Bwaulo*—cloud of smoke, surrounding a village.
[4] Both roads lead to the north-west district.
[5] Pattern of facial decoration.
[6] Flattery-bond (cf. ch. xi, sec. 3).
[7] Both southern villages.

VI

"It is the time for the journey, the journey to Kiriwila.[1]
The children tried to retain me.
I shall go my road and come to Yalumugwa.[2]
My *dala*[3]—the men; my love—the women.
They admire my *paya*.[4]
When I come to Okaykoda, my friends will greet me.
My mind is sad.
I am a Luba man, my fish is *kaysipu*.
I have fallen on evil days."

The Story of Kaytalugi

Besides legends of events in a distant epoch, the natives tell tales of far-away places. At almost every point of the compass, if we were to believe the natives, some remarkable country is to be found if we travel far enough. One such place is of interest to us here because of the peculiarities of its inhabitants.

"Far away, beyond the open sea—*walum*, as the natives say—if you were to sail between Sim-sim and Muyuwa (i.e. in a northerly direction) you would come to a large island. It is called Kaytalugi. Its size is that of Boyowa (the name of the largest island in the Trobriand group). There are many villages. Only women live in them. They are all beautiful. They go about naked. They don't shave their pubic hair. It grows so long that it makes something like a *doba* (grass petticoat) in front of them.

"These women are very bad, very fierce. This is be-

[1] North-western district.
[2] Village due north of Kwabulo.
[3] Sub-clan.
[4] Turtle-shell ear-rings.

cause of their insatiable desire. When sailors are stranded on the beach, the women see the canoes from afar. They stand on the beach awaiting them. The beach is dark with their bodies, they stand so thick. The men arrive, the women run towards them. They throw themselves upon them at once. The pubic leaf is torn off; the women do violence to the men. It is like the *yausa* of the people in Okayaulo. The *yausa* has its season during the *pwakova*. When it is over, it is over. In Kaytalugi the women do it all the time. They never leave the men alone. There are many women there. When one has finished, another comes along. When they cannot have intercourse, they use the man's nose, his ears, his fingers, his toes—the man dies.

"Boys are born on the island. A boy never grows up. A small one is misused till he dies. The women abuse him. They use his penis, his fingers, his toes, his hands. He is very tired, he becomes sick and dies."

Such is the account given by the natives of the island with the significant name. *Kayta* means "to copulate"; *lugi* is a suffix denoting complete satiation. Thus Kaytalugi means "the fill of copulation." The natives believe absolutely in the reality of this island and in the truth of every detail of their account. They tell circumstantial stories of how sailors, driven towards the island by a strong wind, will land on desert reefs rather than risk making Kaytalugi. The distance to the island is about a night and a day's journey. If you set sail in the morning and go *obomatu* (due north), you will arrive next morning at the island.

There are also stories, believed to be true, about men who went there and succeeded in escaping. Thus, long ago, some men of Kaulagu were stranded on the island, driven off their course, according to some versions, during a *kula* expedition. But another story has it that they went there on purpose. It is a custom in the Trobriands, when work comes to a dead-lock, for one of the men to utter a challenge. Some extraordinary exploit, some diversion or festivity is proposed by him, which he always has to lead, usually to organize, and sometimes to finance. Those who are challenged have to follow him. On one occasion the men of Kaulagu were engaged in planting yams. The work was very hard, the yam supports refused to penetrate the stony soil. The headman cried out: *Uri yakala Kaytalugi!* "My challenge Kaytalugi! Let us go and see the women." The others agreed. "They filled their canoe with food, firewood, water bottles, and green coco-nuts. They sailed. One night they slept on the sea, the second night they slept on the sea, the third morning they made Kaytalugi. (This does not agree with the version of other informants, but perhaps the wind was not propitious!) The women assembled on the beach: '*Wa!* men are coming to our country!' They pulled the canoe to pieces, made a heap of the débris on the beach and sat on it. They copulated, copulated, copulated; one month, month after month. The men were distributed, each man was married to one woman. They settled.

"They made gardens for months and then they spoke to their wives. 'Are there many fish in your sea?' The

USIKELA BANANAS IN KAULAGU

[*Ch. XII*, 4]

women answered: 'Very plentiful.' 'Let us repair our canoe,' said the men. 'We shall get some fish, we shall eat it all of us.' They repaired the canoe, they put leaves and food in it, they put in water-bottles and they went away. They sailed three days and came back to Kaulagu, their native village. Their wives, who had mourned them and then remarried, were glad to see them, and came back to them again. They brought home, among other things, a new kind of banana called *usikela*. You can see *usikela* growing in any village now, and eat them. They are very good" (pl. 83). And this is another proof that the story is true, and that Kaytalugi really exists.

When I asked my informants why it was that the men of Kaulagu not only survived but escaped, I was told that they were very strong and that no man allowed sexual access to more than one woman. And just as the women were beginning to get too much for them, they made their escape. It is an interesting example of how every dogmatic version relaxes when elaborated into actual examples, even though these are imaginary.

Another story is told about a man of Kaybola, a village on the northern shore. Fishing for shark, he sailed far away. He came to Kaytalugi and was married by one woman. Feeling tired of her too persistent embraces, he made holes in all the local canoes, overhauled his own, and then suggested to his wife that the fish were very good that morning. He put to sea and set sail. The women of Kaytalugi pushed their canoes into the water to pursue him. But the canoes were swamped and the man returned safely to Kaybola.

When I expressed my doubt as to the reality of this island, my informants suggested that it was all very well to be sceptical, but at the same time I must not try to go there on pain of never getting away again. They added that all *gumanuma* (white men) would like to go to Kaytalugi, but were afraid to do so. "Look, not one *gumanuma* has been to Kaytalugi!"—another irrefutable proof of its existence.

So far we have been discussing the less sacred classes of folk-lore, and in these we have found the sexual motive predominant. The less the religious or moral significance of a story—the less "real" it is to the native—the more frivolous it becomes; and the more frivolous it becomes, the more frequently, as in the fairy tales (*kukwanebu*), does it hinge on sex. But among legends, there is only one story which has sex as its principal motive, that of Inuvayla'u, and only one geographical account, that of Kaytalugi. The real myths (*lili'u*) hardly ever have a sex motive; the myths of the origins of humanity and of the social order, for instance, are completely free of it. Again, in the cycle of stories about the hero Tudava, the only sexual reference occurs in the incident of the virgin birth, the mechanism of which is discreetly and chastely described: the hero's mother sleeps in a grotto, and the dripping water (*litukwa*) from the roof pierces her hymen, penetrates the vagina and thus "opens her" (*ikaripwala*), making it possible for her to conceive (see ch. vii).

No sexual elements are to be found in the several myths referring to the circular trade *kula;* or in those of

the origin of fishing, of canoes, and of diving for the spondylus shell. Nor are any to be found in the myth of old age, death, and the annual visit of the spirits.

Fire, according to legend, was brought forth by the same woman who produced the sun and the moon. The sun and moon wander away into the sky, but the mother keeps the fire, concealing it in her vagina. Whenever she needs it for cooking, she takes it out of its hiding place. But one day her younger brother discovers where she keeps it, steals it, and gives it to other people. This is the only genuine myth with a distinctly sexual element.

Sex does not play a very important part in beliefs about supernatural beings. The only exception to this rule is the idea that some witches (*yoyova*) have intercourse with *tauva'u* (malignant, anthropomorphic beings who come from the southern islands and cause epidemics). Thus Ipwaygana, a woman of the Malasi clan who was married, against all the rules of exogamy, to Modulabu, the Malasi headman of Obweria, has a familiar *tauva'u*, who visits her sexually and teaches her the arts of evil magic (she is to be seen on plates 77 and 78). Bomwaytani of Kaybola, the headman's wife and a notorious *yoyova*, is also known to have a liaison with such a malignant, superhuman instructor.

But in the Trobriands such cases are sporadic. The belief in a witches' Sabbath which seems to obtain among the Southern Massim, is not found in the northern district. Informants from Normanby Island and from the islands of the east end told me that witches forgather at night and meet Ta'ukuripokapoka, a mythological per-

sonality and apparently an expert in evil craft. Dances and orgies take place, in which the witches copulate with male beings and even with Ta'ukuripokapoka himself.

5

THE EROTIC PARADISE OF THE TROBRIANDER

In the Trobriands, as in almost every culture, one of the most important dogmatic systems or mythologies is that referring to a future life.

The Trobrianders place the spirit world on a small island called Tuma lying to the north-west. There, unseen by mortal eyes, undisturbed by the troubles of the world, the spirits lead an existence very much like that of ordinary Trobriand life, only much more pleasant.[1] Let me quote a good description by one of my best informants, Tomwaya Lakwabulo (pl. 37), a famous seer, a spiritistic medium of no mean talent and imagination (also of no small cunning) and a frequent guest of the spirit world:

"In Tuma we are all like chiefs; we are beautiful; we have rich gardens and no work to do—the women do it all; we have heaps of ornaments and we have many wives, all of them lovely." This summarizes the ideas and aspirations of the natives with regard to the spirit world—at least, as long as it remains a matter of remote speculation, for their attitude towards death and the desirability of an immediate move to Tuma remains unaffected by what they think of and hope for in the next

[1] Cf. "Baloma: The Spirits of the Dead in the Trobriand Islands," in *Journ. of the R. Anthrop. Institute*, 1916, for a preliminary account, based on my first year's investigations in the Archipelago.

world. On this point they are exactly like ourselves. Many a good Christian will grow enthusiastic about the joys and consolations of Heaven without showing, however, any alacrity to repair thither.

But in distant perspective and as a picture for dogmatic fantasy, the home of the spirits in Tuma remains a paradise, and above all an erotic paradise. When a native talks about it, when he grows eloquent and relates the traditional stories, filled out with scraps of information gathered from recent spiritistic mediums, and elaborates his personal hopes and anticipations—all other aspects soon fade into the background and sex comes to the fore; sex primarily, but set about with its appropriate trappings of personal vanity, display, luxury, good food, and beautiful surroundings.

In their anticipations, Tuma is thronged with beautiful women, all ready to work hard by day and dance by night. The spirits enjoy a perpetual scented bacchanal of dancing and chanting on spacious village-places or on beaches of soft sand, amid a profusion of betel and of green coconut drinks, of aromatic leaves and magically potent decorations, of wealth and the insignia of honour. In Tuma each one becomes endowed with such beauty, dignity, and skill that he is the unique, the admired, the pampered protagonist of a never-ending feast. By some extraordinary sociological mechanism, all commoners become chiefs, while no chief believes that his relative rank is to be diminished or dimmed by the spirits of his inferiors.

Let us follow the adventures of a spirit as he enters his future home.

After certain preliminary formalities, the spirit comes face to face with Topileta, the guardian of the road to Tuma. This person, who belongs to the Lukuba clan, looks very much like a man and is essentially human in his appetites, tastes, and vanities. But he is of the consistency of a spirit, and his appearance is distinguished by very large ears which flop like the wings of a flying fox. He lives with a daughter or several daughters.

The spirit is well advised to address Topileta in a friendly fashion and to ask the road, at the same time presenting the valuables which were given to him for the journey to Tuma by his surviving relatives. These valuables, be it noted, are not buried with the body nor destroyed, only pressed and rubbed against it before death and afterwards placed on the corpse for a time (see ch. vi, sec. 3). Their spiritual counterparts are supposed to be taken by the spirit of the deceased on his journey to the next world, and then, according to one version, offered to Topileta, or, according to another, used to decorate the spirit's own person on his entrance into Tuma. No doubt an intelligent spirit finds a way to do justice to both requirements.

Topileta, however, is not satisfied with mere gifts. His lust is equal to his greed, so that if the spirit is a female he copulates with her, if a male he hands him over to his daughter for the same purpose. This accomplished, Topileta puts the stranger on his way, and the spirit proceeds.

The spirits know that a newcomer is arriving and throng to greet him. Then a rite is performed which

deeply affects his mind. The spirit arrives filled with sorrow. He yearns for those left behind, for his widow, his sweetheart, his children. He longs to be surrounded with his family, and to return to the bosom of his wife or of his earthly love. But in Tuma there is an aromatic herb called *bubwayayta*. This is made into a *vana* (bundle) and magic is spoken over it by a fair spirit-woman, immediately before a male spirit appears upon the island. As he approaches the group who stand awaiting him, the most passionate, and, no doubt, the loveliest of the spirit women runs towards him and waves the scented herb before his face. The scent enters his nostrils, carrying with it the magic of *bubwayayta*. As with the first sip of the water of Lethe, so this scent makes him forget all that he has left on earth, and from that moment he thinks no more of his wife, yearns no more for his children, desires no more the embraces of earthly loves. His only wish now is to remain in Tuma and to embrace the beautiful though unsubstantial forms of spirit women.

His passions will not remain long unsatisfied. Spirit women, unfleshly though they appear to us mortals, have fire and passion to a degree unknown on earth. They crowd round the man, they caress him, they pull him by force, they use violence on him. Erotically inspired by the *bubwayayta* spell, he yields and a scene is enacted, unseemly to those unused to the ways of a spirit, but apparently quite the thing in Paradise. The man submits to these advances and copulates with the hostess-spirit in the open, while the others look on, or, stimulated by the sight, do likewise. Such promiscuous sexual orgies, in

which male and female mix indiscriminately, congregate, change partners and reunite again, are frequent among the spirits. So at least I was told by several eyewitnesses, not from the world of spirits, but from that of mediums.

For I luckily had the privilege of discussing these matters with a number of seers who had actually been in Tuma, dwelled among the spirits, and returned to tell the tale. Most prominent among my informants was Tomwaya Lakwabulo, whose name had been mentioned to me and his exploits recorded with a mixture of respect and cynicism, before I actually met and worked with him.[1] I also had opportunities of speaking with Bwaylagesi, a woman medium, with Moniga'u, and with one or two other lesser mediums. The details of life in Tuma given so far are common property and form part of general folk-lore; and my eyewitnesses only confirmed these, though they were able to add colour and concrete vividness to them. I shall now proceed to more esoteric information.

Tomwaya Lakwabulo was married on earth to a woman called Beyawa, who died about a year before I came to Oburaku. He has seen her since in Tuma, and, remarkably enough, she has remained faithful to him, regards herself as his wife over there, and will have nothing to do with anyone else. This is Tomwaya Lakwabulo's own

[1] Cf. "Baloma: The Spirits of the Dead" (*Journ. R. Anthr. Inst.*, 1916), published before my third expedition. During this expedition I lived for several months in Oburaku, saw Tomwaya Lakwabulo in trances and in his sober moods, and used him as a medium. I found that in spite of the unmasking of Tomwaya Lakwabulo, described in the article noted, he enjoyed an undiminished prestige in his own community and in the Trobriands universally. In this respect also, the Trobrianders do not greatly differ from ourselves.

version. He agrees, however, that in this respect the late Beyawa, or rather her spirit, is an unprecedented exception to all other spirit women. For they all, married and unmarried alike, are sexually accessible to anybody—to him, Tomwaya Lakwabulo, in any case. They all, with the exception of Beyawa, make *katuyausi* and receive *ulatile* visits.

It was long ago, when Beyawa was young and attractive, that Tomwaya Lakwabulo paid his first visit to Tuma. He then made the acquaintance of one of the most beautiful spirit girls, Namyobe'i, a daughter of Guyona Vabusi, headman of Vabusi, a large village on the shore of Tuma. She fell in love with him; and, as she was so very beautiful and moreover performed *bubwayayta* magic upon him, he succumbed to her charms and married her. Thus he became, so to speak, a bigamist, or at least a spiritual bigamist, having his wife on earth in Oburaku and his spiritual wife in Vabusi. Since that time, he has regularly frequented the land of spirits during trances, when he neither eats nor drinks nor moves for weeks. (At least, in theory: I visited Tomwaya Lakwabulo in one of these trances, and succeeded in insinuating a tin of bully beef and some lemon squash into him, and moved him to accept two sticks of tobacco.) These professional visits to Tuma, besides being agreeable on account of Namyobe'i, are profitable, for he carries rich presents to the spirits, entrusted to him by their surviving relatives. There is no reason to doubt that the spiritual part of the presents reaches the ghosts in Tuma.

It is to the credit both of Tomwaya Lakwabulo and

of the late Beyawa that she knew and approved of his spiritual partnership, and even allowed her own daughter to be called Namyobe'i after the spirit wife. Now both wives have met in Tuma, but they inhabit different villages. This is in accordance with a general rule, for each earthly community has its spirit colony to which the deceased move after death. There are also a few villages *sui generis*, not recruited from this world and showing strange characteristics. One of them is inhabited by women who live in houses on piles as tall as coco-nut palms. No man is ever allowed to enter the village and no man has ever had intercourse with the women. They bring forth children, but exclusively of the female sex. Such female puritans are, however, happily the exception in Tuma, where love, enjoyment, and lazy pleasure enfold the happy spirits.

To enjoy life and love it is necessary to be young. Even in Tuma, old age—that is, wrinkles, grey hair, and feebleness—creeps upon the spirits. But in Tuma there exists a remedy, once accessible to all mankind, but now lost to this world.

For old age to the Trobrianders is not a natural state—it is an accident, a misadventure. Long ago, shortly after mankind had come upon earth from underground, human beings could rejuvenate at will by casting off the old withered skin; just as crabs, snakes, and lizards, and those creatures that creep and burrow underground, will every now and then throw off the old covering and start life with a new and perfect one. Humanity unfortunately lost this art—through the folly of an ancestress, according

to legend—but in Tuma the happy spirits have retained it.[1] When they find themselves old, they slough off the loose, wrinkled skin, and emerge with a smooth body, dark locks, sound teeth, and full of vigour. Thus life with them is an eternal recapitulation of youth with its accompaniment of love and pleasure.

So their time passes in dancing, singing, and all that goes with these—festive dressing, decoration, scents of aromatic oils and herbs. Every evening, in the cool season, when the persistent trade wind abates, or when the fresh sea breezes quicken the air during the sultry time of the monsoon, the spirits put on festive attire and repair to the *baku* of their village to dance, just as is done in the Trobriands. At times, departing from earthly usage, they will go to the beach and dance on firm cool sand beaten by breakers.

Many songs are composed by the spirits and some of these reach the earth, brought thither by mediums. In common with most such productions, these songs are a glorification of the composer. "The glory of their *butia* (flower wreath) they sing; of their dancing; of their *nabwoda'u* (ornamented basket); of their facial paintings and decoration." It was quite clear that skill in gardening or carving, outstanding achievements in war or in the *kula*, were no longer objects of ambition to the spirits. Instead we find dancing and personal beauty celebrated, and these mainly as a setting and a preliminary to sex enjoyment.

[1] For a fuller account see "Myths of Death and the Recurrent Cycle of Life," on pp. 80-106 of *Myth in Primitive Psychology*.

I will quote one example of such a song, entitled Usiyawenu; it was composed by a ghost in Tuma, and brought to earth by Mitakayyo of Oburaku, a medium who was already permanently settled in Tuma when I came to the Trobriands.

I

I shall sing the song of idle enjoyment—
My mind boils over upon my lips—
They range themselves round a circle on the *baku,*
I shall join them on the *baku*—
The conch-shell is blown—listen!
Look! The flaming *butia* wreath,
The *butia* of my sweetheart.

II

My father weeps, they start the mortuary dance for me.
Come! Let us chew betel-nut, let us throw the *bubwayayta,*
Let us break the pod of the betel-pepper,
The betel-nut—my mind becomes numb!

III

My friend, standing on the beach—he is full of passion.
He boils over, my friend on the northern shore of Tuma.
The red-haired man dreams of me,
He has an ornamental basket,
His face shines like the moon in its fullness.

* * * * *

IV

The white clouds gather low over the skyline,
I cry silently.

* * * * *

V

On a hill in Tuma, I rock my baby to sleep,
I shall go and look after my sister,
I shall put a *bagido'u* round my head,
I shall paint my mouth with crushed betel-nut,
I shall adorn myself with armshells on the western shore.

* * * * *

ACCUMULATION OF FOOD FOR A FEAST

Yams are heaped up on the ground and fill the pwata' (*prism-shaped wooden receptacle*): *coco-nuts, sugar cane, bananas and bunches of areca nut are displayed on top—the whole producing on the native a strong impression of beauty, power, and importance. This is done at the* milamala (*annual return of the spirits*) *as well as at mortuary and other distributions* (sagali).

CROWD COLLECTED ON A BEACH TO ADMIRE A LARGE CATCH

A few of the people are fishermen, others are there to receive the fish and carry it away; the majority are spectators fascinated by the success of the fishing expedition and by the accumulation of food.

A Trobriand song is always full of omissions and of allusions to events well known to the listeners, and can never be quite intelligible to a stranger. Even my native informants, however, were not able fully to interpret this song.

After two introductory lines, the first stanza describes the preparations for a dance in Tuma. In the second stanza we have the sudden abandonment of earthly interests, brought about by *bubwayayta*. In the third, a woman sings of a man beloved by her. She is obviously still on earth, and her husband or sweetheart—the composer of the song apparently—has passed into Tuma. She looks to the north-west where monsoon clouds gather, and weeps for him (stanza iv). In the last of the translated stanzas she herself has entered Tuma and describes her attire which, as with all spirits, seems to have become her main concern. It is to her credit that she has not forgotten her baby, though how such a sentimental reminiscence fits into the frivolous atmosphere of Tuma none of my interpreters could explain.

CHAPTER XIII

MORALS AND MANNERS

The sexual freedom which we find among the Trobriand Islanders must not be mis-called "immorality," and placed in a non-existent category. "Immorality," in the sense of an absence of all restraints, rules, and values, cannot exist in any culture, however debased or perverted it may be. "Immorality," on the other hand, in the sense of morals different from those which we pretend to practise, must be anticipated in every society other than our own or those which are under the influence of Christian and Western culture.

As a matter of fact, the Trobrianders have as many rules of decency and decorum as they have liberties and indulgences. Among all the customs of sexual liberty so far described, there is not one warrant of licence which does not imply definite limits; not one concession to the sexual impulse but imposes new restrictions; not one relaxation of the usual taboos but exacts compensation in one way or another.

All Trobriand institutions have their negative as well as their positive side: they bestow privileges but they also imply renunciations. Thus, marriage presents many legal, economic, and personal advantages, but it also means the exclusion of extra-matrimonial intercourse, especially for the wife, and a number of restrictions in manners and conduct. The institution of the *bukumatula*

(bachelors' house) has its taboos as well as its privileges. Even such customs as *yausa*, *katuyausi*, and *ulatile*, all of which are especially constituted for licence, are hedged round with conditions and limitations.

The reader who, after the perusal of the previous chapters, still retains a sense of moral superiority over the Trobrianders, will have to be told in the following pages directly and explicitly that the Trobriander has just as clear-cut a feeling for modesty in dress and in behaviour as we have, and that he would be as shocked by us on certain occasions, as we are shocked by him on others. In the matter of excretory functions, for instance, he shows far more delicacy than most Europeans of the lower classes, and certain "sanitary" arrangements current in the south of France and other Mediterranean countries would horrify and disgust him. His tolerance is certainly great as regards the natural forms of sexual intercourse, but to compensate for this, he is free from many aberrations of the sexual impulse. "Unnatural vice," on which we need to impose heavy penalties, has no place in his life, except as a subject for contemptuous amusement. He is shocked when he sees or hears about Europeans dancing pressed against each other; or when he finds a white man jesting and unconstrained in his sister's company, or showing tenderness to his wife in public. In fact, his attitude to his moral rules is very much like our own, whether we call ourselves Christians or Agnostics: he believes in them firmly, regards their infringement with disapproval, and even keeps to them, not perfectly and not without effort, but with a reasonable amount of earnestness and goodwill.

Many things which we regard as natural, proper, and moral are anathema to the Trobriander. And the *onus probandi* would rest on anyone who maintained that the Trobriander's morality is wrong and ours is right, that his limitations and barriers are inadequate and artificial while ours are sufficient and real. In some respects his moral regulations are biologically sounder than our own, in some more refined and subtle, in some a more efficient safeguard for marriage and the family. In other matters again we might reasonably claim to be his moral superiors. The best way to approach sexual morality in an entirely different culture is to remember that the sexual impulse is never entirely free, neither can it ever be completely enslaved by social imperatives. The limits of freedom vary; but there is always a sphere within which it is determined by biological and psychological motives only and also a sphere in which the control of custom and convention is paramount.

It was necessary to clear the ground before proceeding to the subject of this chapter, for there is no greater source of error in sociology than a false perspective in sexual morality; and it is an error especially hard to confound, as it is based on ignorance which does not want to be enlightened and on intolerance which fears the wider charity of understanding.

I

DECENCY AND DECORUM

As we know, the natives not only have definite laws, stringent in their application and enforced by punish-

ments, but also a sense of right and wrong and canons of correct behaviour not devoid of delicacy and refinement.

The forms and customs which are associated with the conduct of such elementary physiological functions as eating and drinking, defecation and micturition are a good illustration of this, and are also illuminating and relevant to our immediate subject, sexual manners.

Eating is not regarded as indispensable to life, nor is the value of food as a utility recognized and formulated by the natives. In fact, they have no idea that there is such a thing as physiological need for alimentation, or that the body is built up on food. According to them, one eats because one has appetite, because one is hungry or greedy. The act of eating is very pleasant, and it is a suitable expression of a joyful mood. Large accumulations of food (pl. 84), their formal distribution (*sagali*) and, at times, their immediate, though not public, consumption form the core of all native festivities and ceremonies. "We shall be glad, we shall eat till we vomit," say the natives, in anticipation of some tribal ceremony or festival. To give food is a virtuous act. The provider of food, the organizer of many big *sagali* (distributions) is a great man and a good man. Food is displayed in all forms and on all occasions, and they show great interest in new crops, in a rich yield of garden produce, and in a large catch of fish (see pl. 85).

Yet meals are never taken in public, and eating is altogether regarded as a rather dangerous and delicate act. Not only will people never eat in a strange village, but even within the same community the custom of eating in common is limited. After a big distribution, the people

retire to their own fireplaces with their portion, each group turning its back on the rest. There is no actual conviviality on a large scale. Even when the big communal cooking of taro takes place, small groups of related people assemble round the pot which has been allotted to them, and which they have carried away to a secluded spot. There they eat rapidly, no one else witnessing the performance (pl. 86).

In fact, eating is rather a means of social division and discrimination than a way of bringing people together. To begin with, distinctions of rank are marked by food taboos. People of the highest rank are practically constrained to eat within their own circle, and those of a lower status have to forgo part of their normal diet if they eat in the presence of their superiors, in order not to shock them. Table manners are thus a household affair and are not very polished. Food is eaten with the fingers; and smacking of lips, noisy expressions of enjoyment and belching are not considered incorrect. To be intently concentrated on one's food and to eat voraciously is, however, thought to be ugly.

Plenty in the matter of food is good and honourable, scarcity is shameful and bad. But opulence in food is a matter of privilege, to be enjoyed in safety only by chiefs and people of higher rank. It is distinctly dangerous for a commoner to be too good a gardener, to have too big, too richly decorated and too well-filled yam houses. The chief distributes food in the form of gifts, he receives it in the form of tribute. He alone should have decorated yam houses; he must surpass everybody in the display

PLATE 86

A Small Group Eating Taro

[*Ch. XIII*, 1; *also ch. XI*, 2]

of food during the *milamala* (the return of the spirits), at ceremonial distributions and during the harvest.

Psychologically interesting is the magic called *vilamalia*. It is directed against the elementary impulse to eat and takes away appetite, so that the food remains in the yam houses until it rots. *Malia* (plenty) and *molu* (scarcity or hunger) are very important categories in native life.[1] *Molu* is bad and shameful. It is a terrible insult to tell a man he is hungry; to say to him: *gala kam* ("no food thine"—"thou hast no food") or *togalagala yoku* ("thou art a man of no substance"). The use of scarcity and hunger as means of insult is an illustration of the ways in which shortcomings can be brought home to the natives. A man will endure real hunger rather than expose himself to the sarcastic question: "Is there no food in thy village?"

To sum up: the act of eating is regarded by the natives as an expression of a powerful impulse, of a strong passion. As such it is an important part of the ordinary routine of life; the evening meal is as indispensable a domestic event as rest after work and conversation with the neighbours. It also occupies an important place in every festival and within the realms of the sacred. Food is a means of emphasizing social distinctions, whether of rank or in tribal grouping, and thus indirectly provides a bond of social union. What happens in the alimentary duct after the food has been swallowed is not a matter of concern to the natives; nor does metabolism influence

[1] Cf. my article, "The Lunar and Seasonal Calendar in the Trobriands," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 1927.

cultural life again until the alimentary process is complete, when waste matters claim the native's attention and demand customs and cultural arrangements for the disguise of excretory processes. For, as we pointed out when describing the care of the body (see ch. x, sec. 4), the natives have a strong æsthetic feeling against uncleanliness, whether in their own persons or in their surroundings. Unpleasant smells and unclean matters disgust them, especially if they are of an excretory nature.

For this reason the greatest hardship of mourning lies, not in the covering of the body with soot or charcoal, but in the taboo on ablutions. Excretion within the house is quoted as a very heavy burden on those confined by mourning or disease and on their relatives who have to perform the necessary services. The duty of receiving the excreta of small children in receptacles, with the liability of becoming soiled and the necessity of carrying the dirty matter into the bush, is often mentioned as one of the hardships which give to parents, and especially to the father, a permanent claim on the gratitude of the child. It is also quoted as a reason why the child should look after the parents later on, and incidentally repay these particular services in kind should they fall ill.

The handling of the corpse and the operations upon it incidental to certain mortuary practices; the ritual swallowing of putrid matter which is a duty of some of the survivors, are obligations which involve heroic devotion on the part of the performers.

Good care is taken to prevent the accumulation of dirt in the village, above all to prevent any excretory matter

TYPICAL LAGOON VILLAGE

[*Ch. XIII*, 1]

from being deposited near the settlement. Villages are always carefully swept, and all refuse placed on the outskirts in large heaps called *wawa*. Especially offensive matters, such as decomposing fish, are usually covered with earth.

The sanitary arrangements consist of two reserves in the bush at some distance from the village, the one frequented by men and the other by women. These reserves are scrupulously adhered to, and the surroundings of a village in the Trobriands, as well as the roads, would compare favourably with those in most European countries, especially the Latin ones.

Natives will never go to these reserves together, nor will they ever defecate near one another. At sea, a man will enter the water and ease himself below the surface, supported by others in the canoe; for defecation both sexes squat; for micturition the women squat and men remain standing.

Certain villages, squeezed in between mangrove swamp and lagoon, have little dry land outside the settlement, and find it hard to satisfy the demands of sanitation (pl. 87). In such a village each sex repairs to one side of the beach and tries to choose a spot which will be covered by the tide. But even so they have an evil reputation, and often, in passing through one, I have seen my native companions close their nostrils and spit freely, and have heard their outspoken comments upon its dirt. And yet, in these fishing villages, even the refuse of fish is carefully disposed of, and after preparing fish for eating

the people always wash their hands carefully and anoint themselves with coco-nut oil.

After excretion the parts are carefully cleansed with soft leaves, called in this context *poyewesi* (*po*, root of "excretion"; *yewesi*, leaves). Children are taught to observe strict cleanliness in this respect, and a careless child is not infrequently shamed by its parents or elders:—

Mayna popu!	*gala*	*kuvaysi*
Odour of excrement!	Not	thou wipest
kosiyam	*mayna kasukwanise!*	
thy remnant of excrement,	odour we (excl.) smell!	

Social distinctions influence considerably the way in which natives are allowed to speak about the subject. The ordinary name for excrement (*popu*), or the verb to defecate (*popu* or *pwaya*) are never used in the presence of a *guya'u* (chief, man of high rank). A special polite word, *solu* or *sola* (lit.: "descend"), is substituted, or else such euphemisms as to "go down" (*busi*), "go and return" (*bala baka'ita*). A man would never excuse himself from a chief's presence by saying, "I have to go and defecate" (*bala bapopu*); he would say instead: *bala basolu*, or *bala babusi*, "I shall go down"; or *bala baka'ita*, "I shall go and return."

The word "excrement" is also used in the typical form of bad language, "eat thy dirt" (*kumkwam popu* or *kukome kam popu*). This expression, if used good-humouredly, might be taken as a joke and condoned, but it lies on the border-line between chaff and insult, and

must never be said angrily. Above all, it must never be said in the presence of a chief, and to use it to him as an insult is an unpardonable offence.

The following incident, which took place during the last war between To'uluwa, high chief of Omarakana, and his traditional foe, the headman of Kabwaku, is a good illustration of the native attitude towards this insult when directed against a chief. During a lull in the fighting, when the two forces were facing each other, a Kabwaku man, Si'ulobubu, climbed a tree and addressed To'uluwa in a loud voice: "*Kukome kam popu, To'uluwa.*" Here was the insult delivered with every aggravating circumstance. It was addressed to a chief, it was said aloud and in public, and the personal name was added, the form in which the insult is deadliest. After the war, when peace was concluded and all other enmities forgotten, Si'ulobubu was openly speared in broad daylight by a few men sent by To'uluwa for that purpose. The victim's family and clansmen did not even raise a protest, still less did they ask for "blood money," or start a *lugwa* (vendetta). Everybody knew that the man had deserved this punishment and that his death was a just and adequate *mapula* (payment, retribution) for his crime. It is even an insult to make this remark to a chief's pig in his hearing, though it is permitted so to address his dog.[1]

The dissociation between sex and excretion, or the excretory processes, is very pronounced in native sentiment

[1] Cf. the myth of the pig and the dog below in sec. 5, and in *Myth in Primitive Psychology*, 1926, where its historical importance is discussed.

and idea. As we know, scrupulous cleanliness is an essential in the ideal of personal attraction. Sodomy is repugnant to natives, and their attitude to it is summed up in the phrase: *matauna ikaye popu* ("this man copulates excrement"). Fæces have no place in magic, custom, or ritual; nor do they even play any part in sorcery.

In my own experience I have always found the natives very clean and never received any unpleasant olfactory impression in my various social contacts with them. Nor, by the consensus of opinion among white residents, is their bodily odour unpleasant to the European.

Intestinal gases are never released in the presence of other people. Such an act is considered very shameful, and would dishonour and mortify anyone guilty of it. Even in a crowd where it can be committed anonymously, such a breach of etiquette never happens in Melanesia, so that a native crowd is considerably more pleasant in this respect than a gathering of European peasants.[1] If such a mishap befalls a man by accident, he feels the disgrace deeply and his reputation suffers. Also it will be remembered how quickly an explosive escape of intestinal gas was visited upon the unfortunate louse in one of the fireside stories told in the last chapter.

Scents are as much appreciated and sought after as bad smells are abhorred and avoided. We have seen what an important part is played in native toilet by the variously and exquisitely scented flowers of the Islands: the long white petals of the pandanus, the *butia* and a

[1] For some interesting sociology on this subject as among European peasants, cf. Zola's *La Terre*.

long list of aromatic herbs, in which the mint (*sulumwoya*) takes the lead; and we have also seen the use made of oil perfumed with sandal wood. Pleasant smells are closely associated with magical influence; and as we know already many charms in the magic of *kula*, of love, of beauty, and of success are made over mint, over the *butia* flower, and over several aromatic herbs used as *vana* (tuft placed in the armlet). Personal cleanliness is an essential in all these forms of magic, and charming the *kaykakaya* (washing leaves) is an important part of the ritual.[1]

Indeed, the sense of smell is the most important factor in the laying of spells on people; magic, in order to achieve its greatest potency, must enter through the nose. Love charms are borne into the victim on the scent of some spellbound aromatic substance. In the second and very dangerous stage of sorcery, the object or compound over which black magic has been done is burned, and the smoke enters through the nostrils into the body against which it is directed and causes disease (*silami*). For this reason, houses are never built on piles in the Trobriands, as it would greatly facilitate this stage in the sorcerer's work. Thus the idea of magical infection through the nose exercises a considerable influence on the culture of the natives.

The malignant witches (*mulukwausi*) are believed to emit a smell reminiscent of excrement. This smell is much feared, especially by people who are sailing, for

[1] Cf. chs. viii and xi of this book, and chs. xiii and xvii of *Argonauts of the Western Pacific.*

witches are very dangerous on water. In general the smell of ordure and decomposing matter is thought to be noxious to human health. The natives believe that a special substance emanates from the corpse of a dead person. This, though invisible to the ordinary eye, can be seen by sorcerers, to whom it appears somewhat like the cloud of smoke (*bwaulo*) which hangs over a village. This emanation, which is also called *bwaulo*, is especially dangerous to the maternal kinsmen of the deceased, and because of it they must not approach the corpse, nor perform any of the mortuary duties (see ch. vi, sec. 2).

A few words will suffice to recapitulate here what we already know (see ch. x, sec. 4) about the conventions, manners, and morals of dress. The various functions of attire in enhancing personal beauty, in marking social distinctions, in expressing the character of the occasion on which they are worn do not concern us here, but a word must be added about dress in its relation to modesty. Modesty in the Trobriands requires only that the genitals and a small part of the adjacent areas should be covered, but the native has absolutely the same moral and psychological attitude towards any infringement of these demands as we have. It is bad, and shameful, and ludicrous in a degrading sense not to conceal, carefully and properly, those parts of the human body which should be covered by dress. Moreover there is a certain coquettish emphasis in the care and elegance with which women manipulate their fibre skirts whenever they fear that dress may fail in its duty, through wind or rapid movement.

The broad bleached leaf of the pandanus or areca palm which covers the male genitals is always put in place so precisely and securely that no instance of disarrangement has occurred within my knowledge. No person must ever touch it when it is in position. The word for it, *yavigu*, used with the pronoun of nearest possession as if it were a part of the body, is also an improper word which must not be uttered save in intimacy. It is interesting, however, that when it is necessary for practical reasons for men to take off the pubic leaf, as during the fishing or diving activities, this is done without either false shame or the slightest symptom of improper interest. The natives convey clearly by behaviour and comment that nakedness is not shameful when it is necessary, but becomes so when due to carelessness or lewdness (see ch. iii, sec. 1, and secs. 3 and 4 of this chap.). Though the taboos surrounding female dress and its name are less stringent, it is just as carefully used as an instrument of modesty.

I have assembled these facts from certain aspects of intimate life, from the physiology of eating and excretion and from the treatment of anatomical aspects of the body, to illustrate native manners; and to demonstrate that, in spite of certain things which shock us profoundly, the natives show a delicacy and restraint in others which not only is elaborate and well defined, but is expressive of real moral attitudes: a substantial consideration for the feelings of others and certain sound biological principles. We may be shocked at a savage who tears his meat with his fingers, smacks his lips, grunts and belches in the enjoyment of his food; while the custom of eating each

other's lice is to us decidedly unappetizing. But the native is equally disgusted when the European gorges himself on stinking cheese, or consumes undefined abominations from tins; or when he unashamedly eats stingaree, wild pig or any other matters permitted only to people of the lowest rank. He is also shocked at the white man's habit of making himself temporarily imbecile or violent with gin and whisky. If, to an uneducated white man, Melanesian dress may appear inadequate, the strange custom prevalent among white women of reducing instead of adding to their dress for festive occasions is upsetting and indecorous to the native who meets it on his travels to European settlements.

Even now, when a more liberal and instructed policy directs the relations between native and European, it is well to remember these things; and to keep in mind that wisdom and good manners alike demand that we respect those feelings in other people which are dictated by their own cultural standards.

2

THE MORALS OF SEX

Before proceeding to a detailed consideration of the subject of this section, we will assemble and briefly restate the relevant facts already in our possession, so that they may be presented to the reader in their proper perspective. For the inter-relation of facts and the proportions they assume in native life are as important as, if not more so than, the isolated facts themselves, if we

are to arrive at right conclusions and have a true picture of Trobriand communal life.

And to see the facts from the native point of view, that is, in their true relation to tribal life, we must again remind ourselves that sex as such is not tabooed. That is to say, the sexual act, provided that it is carried out in private and within certain sociological limits, is not regarded as reprehensible, even when it is not sanctioned by the bond of marriage. The barriers within which sexual freedom obtains, the methods by which these barriers are upheld and the penalties which fall upon the transgressor, can be classified broadly into two groups: the general taboos, which brand certain forms of sexual activity as objectionable, indecent, or contemptible; and the sociological restrictions which debar certain individuals and groups from sexual access.

A. GENERAL TABOOS

1. *Byways and aberrations of the sexual impulse.*—Homosexual intercourse, bestiality, exhibitionism, oral and anal eroticism—to use psycho-analytic terminology—are, as we already know, regarded by the natives as inadequate and contemptible substitutes for the proper exercise of the sexual impulse. The natives achieve an almost complete freedom from perversion by means of what might be called psychological rather than social sanctions. Sexual aberrations are ridiculed, they are a subject for invective and comic anecdote, and thus treated, they are not only branded as improper but are effectively made undesirable.

2. *Publicity and lack of decorum in sexual matters.*—Public display of the sexual act or of erotic approaches is almost completely absent from tribal life. Lack of care in avoiding publicity, curiosity and any attempt to spy on other people's love-making are regarded as unseemly and contemptible. There are few occasions in tribal life when the sexual act could be carried on in public, nor does the *voyeur* figure even in their pornographic folklore. The only exception from this rule are the erotic competitive festivals (*kayasa*), described in chapter ix, section 5. From the taboo of publicity only the souls of the blessed in Tuma are permanently released, while in the legendary accounts of female assaults on men (in the custom of *yausa*, and on the Island of Kaytalugi), the openness with which copulation takes place is regarded as an additional outrage on the passive victims. Thus sexual intercourse, to be in accordance with tribal sanctions, must be carried on within the strictest limits of privacy and decorum.

3. *Sexual excess.*—The exhibition of sexual greed, or an unabashed forwardness in courting the favour of the other sex, is regarded as bad and despicable in either man or woman, but more especially in woman. This moral attitude should be strictly distinguished from the censure incurred by those people who are too successful in love, and who therefore arouse anger and jealousy.

4. *Lack of taste.*—We have learned (ch. x, sec. 2) the forms of ugliness and repulsiveness which are regarded as deterrent to erotic interest and that the natives will even go so far as to affirm that no one could or

would have intercourse with a person so afflicted. Behind this mere statement of fact there is a definite censure of a mixed moral and æsthetic character which is based on a real and lively sentiment, even though this fails occasionally in practice. It is bad, unbecoming, and worthy of contempt to have anything to do with a human being whose body arouses repugnance. This class of taboo has already been dealt with (in chap. x, sec. 2), and it will not be necessary to return to it.

5. *Miscellaneous and minor taboos.*—There are a number of pursuits which, while in progress, entail abstinence from sexual intercourse and all contact with women; such, for example, are war, oversea sailing expeditions, gardening and one or two magical rites. Again, in certain physiological crises, above all pregnancy and lactation, a woman must not be approached by a man. The general principle which such taboos express is that sex is incompatible with certain conditions of the human body and with the nature and purpose of certain occupations; and it must not be allowed to interfere with these.

B. SOCIOLOGICAL TABOOS

6. *Exogamy.*—Sexual intercourse and marriage are not allowed within the same totemic clan. They are more emphatically forbidden within a sub-division of the clan, common membership in which means real kinship. And the taboo is stricter yet between two people who can trace a common descent genealogically. Yet the natives have only one word, *suvasova*, to designate all these degrees of exogamous taboo. Also, in legal and formal fiction,

the natives would maintain that all exogamous taboos, whether of clan, sub-clan or proven kinship, were equally binding. Thus, while an ethnographer would get one impression through conversation, he would get an entirely different one by observing the behaviour of the natives. In the more detailed examination of the subject which follows, we shall set practice and legal fiction side by side, and show how these work in together.

7. *Taboos within the family and household.*—The father is not a kinsman of his children, and therefore is not included in exogamous prohibitions. Nevertheless, intercourse between father and daughter is definitely and strongly forbidden. There is no doubt that the taboo which separates members of the same household is, in the reality of tribal life though not in legal theory, a distinct force which is superadded to the exogamous taboo. Not only do we find its influence in the separation of father and daughter, but also in the fact that incest with the own mother and with the own sister arouses incomparably greater moral indignation than incest with a cousin; not to speak of incest with a "classificatory" mother or a "classificatory" sister, which is easily condoned.

8. *The taboo of adultery.*—This safeguard to the institution of marriage need only be mentioned here, as it has been fully dealt with in chapter v.

9. *The taboos of relationship in law.*—Although there is no formal avoidance, sexual intercourse between a man and his mother-in-law is definitely wrong. Neither must a man have erotic relations with the sisters of his wife or with the wife of his brother. Marriage with a

deceased wife's sister, though not forbidden, is regarded with disfavour.

10. *Rules safeguarding the privileges of the chief.*—This type of restriction and those which follow are not of the same stringency as the foregoing taboos. They are rather vague rules of conduct, enforced by a general feeling for what is expedient and by somewhat diffuse social sanctions. It is unsafe to interfere with any woman in whom a man of high rank is interested. The ordinary prohibition of adultery becomes much more stringent when the woman concerned is married to a chief. The chief's wife, *giyovila*, is the subject of a special reverence and of a general taboo, which, however, is honoured as much in the breach as in the observance. For she is more desirable and generally no less willing to be desired; and there is a touch of irony and mock respect in certain sayings and turns of speech in which the word *giyovila* figures.

11. *Barriers of rank.*—The distinction between high and low birth, which divides one sub-clan from another, applies to women as well as to men. It is a general principle that people of high rank (*guya'u*) shall not mate with commoners (*tokay*). In marriage, this rule is strictly kept only with regard to the pariah communities of Bwaytalu and Ba'u, which have had perforce to become endogamous, since no man or woman from another village likes to enter into permanent union with any of the inhabitants. The members of the highest sub-clan, the Tabalu of Omarakana (of the Malasi clan), find their

most fitting consorts among two or three other *dala* (sub-clans) in the north-western district.

In prenuptial intercourse, also, there would be some show of discrimination. A girl of high rank would be ashamed of owning to an intrigue with a low-class commoner. But the distinctions in rank are many and their interpretation not too rigid; and the rule is certainly not followed strictly where intrigues are concerned. Girls of high-rank villages, such as Omarakana, Liluta, Osapola, or Kwaybwaga, do not visit the "impure" villages, Ba'u and Bwoytalu, on *katuyausi* expeditions.

12. *Restrictions as to number in intrigues.*—As we have already said, too open and too insistent an interest in sex, especially when exhibited by a woman, and too obvious and too general a success in love are both censured; but the kind of censure is entirely different in the two cases. In the latter, it is the male who incurs the disapproval of his less fortunate rivals. The great dancer, the famous love magician or charmer of his own beauty, is exposed to intense distrust and hatred, and to the dangers of sorcery. His conduct is considered "bad," not as "shameful," but rather as enviable and, at the same time, injurious to the interests of others.

This concludes the list of restrictions placed upon freedom in sexual intercourse. It is clear that moral indignation varies in kind and degree with the categories transgressed—whether these be perversion or incest, breach of exogamy or the infringement of matrimonial and other prerogatives. The last four categories—adultery, tres-

pass on the chief's preserves, intercourse with social inferiors, and numerical excess of intrigues—embrace offences which arouse neither contempt nor moral indignation; they are enforced according to the power of the aggrieved party, backed by the passive support of communal opinion. An adulterer caught *in flagrante* may be killed, and this will be recognized as legal retribution, and not be followed up by a vendetta, especially if the adultery be with a chief's wife (see ch. v, sec. 2). The pre-eminently successful man—especially if of low rank and distinguished only by personal qualities—would be exposed to the danger of sorcery rather than to that of direct violence. And sorcery also would be used against a man suspected of adultery but not caught in the act.

An interesting ethnological document, which throws some light on the retributive use of sorcery, is provided by the specific signs found on a corpse at exhumation indicating the habit, the quality, or the misdeeds for which the man was killed by sorcery. The natives—in common with most primitive races—do not understand "death from natural causes." When not the result of an obvious physical lesion, death is caused by black magic, practised by a sorcerer on his own account, or on behalf of some notable who pays him to bring about his enemy's death. On the body of the victim, when it is ritually taken out of the grave, are found signs (*kala wabu*) which show why he was killed and thus indicate on whose behalf it was done. Such signs may point to sexual jealousy, personal antagonism, political or economic envy as the motive; and of frequent occurrence is the sign indicating

that the victim's too pronounced erotic propensities were his undoing.

Thus marks are sometimes found on a corpse which resemble the erotic scratches (*kimali*) so characteristic of native love-making. Or the body when exhumed is found doubled up with the legs apart, an attitude taken during copulation by man as well as by woman. Or the mouth is pursed, as if to produce the loud smacking of the lips by which one sex invites the other into the darkness beyond the light of village fires. Or again the body swarms with lice, and, as we know, lousing each other and eating the catch is a tender occupation of lovers. All these signs indicate that the man was done to death by sorcery because he was too much addicted to sexual pleasures, or could boast of too many conquests and such as gave special offence to some powerful rival. There are also a number of standardized patterns which may be found on a corpse suggestive of dancing decoration. These indicate that jealousy of his personal appearance, of his renown as a dancer and as a seducer by the dance was the cause of his death.[1]

Such signs have to be noted by the deceased's own relatives, they are discussed freely—generally, however, without any mention of the suspected sorcerer's name or of his employer's—and no special shame attaches to them. This is noteworthy in connection with the native's attitude to the last few taboos, that is those which safeguard the rights of the husband, of the lover, and of the com-

[1] Compare the writer's *Crime and Custom*, pp. 87-94, for a full list of sorcery signs and their significance in tribal law.

munity. Success in love, personal beauty, and surpassing accomplishments are reprehensible because they appeal especially to women and always encroach upon the rights of someone who, if he can, will avenge the wrong by means of sorcery. But, unlike other sexual offences, adultery and success with women are not felt to be shameful or morally wrong. On the contrary, they are enviable, and surround the sinner with a halo of almost tragic glory.[1]

Perhaps the most important linguistic distinction which throws light upon the native psychology as regards taboos is furnished by the use of the word *bomala* (taboo). This noun takes the pronominal suffixes of nearest possession—*boma-gu* (my taboo), *boma-m* (thy taboo), *boma-la* (his taboo)—which signifies that a man's taboo, the things which he must not eat or touch or do, is linguistically classed with those objects most intimately bound up with his person: parts of his body, his kindred, and such personal qualities as his mind (*nanola*), his will (*magila*), and his inside (*lopoula*). Thus *bomala*, those things from which a man must keep away, is an integral part of his personality, something which enters into his moral make-up.

Not all the restrictions and prohibitions on our list can be called by this name. And when it is correctly used,

[1] It was necessary to classify taboos in some way, in order to present the material in a form in which it could be easily surveyed. Obviously my *fundamentum divisionis*—the type of action forbidden—is not the only possible basis for such a classification. The taboos could, for instance, be regrouped according to sanction, intensity of moral feeling, or the varying degree of general interest taken in the prohibition. These differentiating qualities, already indicated, will emerge even more clearly in the course of the descriptions which follow.

its meaning is subject to many subtle variations, indicated by tone and context, according to its application. In its full and correct meaning, the word *bomala* applies to all the acts which are specifically called by the natives *suvasova*—that is, to incest within the family and breach of exogamy. In this context, the word *bomala* denotes an act which must not be committed because it is contrary to the traditional constitution of clan and family; and to all the inviolable laws which have been laid down in old times (*tokunabogwo ayguri*, "of old it was ordained"). Besides this general sanction, which is felt to be rooted in the primeval nature of things, the breach of the *suvasova* taboo entails a supernatural penalty: an illness which covers the skin with sores and produces pains and discomfort throughout the body. (This supernatural penalty can, however, be evaded by the performance of a specific magic which removes the bad effects of endogamous intercourse.) In the case of incest between brother and sister, a very strong emotional tone enters into the attitude of the natives, that is, into the significance of the word *bomala*, endowing it with an unmistakable phonetic colouring of horror and moral repugnance. Thus even in their narrowest and most exclusive sense, the words *bomala* and *suvasova* have various shades of meaning and imply a complex system of traditional law and of social mechanism.[1]

The word *bomala* is also used in its legitimate sense of "taboo" for the several minor prohibitions, such as are

[1] Compare the detailed account of the various contraventions and evasions of traditional law given in *Crime and Custom*.

inherent in a man's office, situation or activity, and in this application it still carries something of the idea of a peremptory traditional rule, maintained by supernatural sanctions. But though the only correct description for such taboos is the word *bomala,* it implies in this context a different emotional attitude, milder sanctions and a different type of rule.

In a less rigid sense *bomala* is used to denote the taboos of adultery, the inexpediency of meddling with what is sexually claimed by a chief, and the undesirability of mating outside one's own rank. In these contexts, however, the word covers only the idea and feeling of a definite rule. It entails neither supernatural sanctions nor the emotion of pronounced moral disapproval, nor even the feeling of a strong obligation. This application of the word is, in fact, not quite correct: the word *bubunela,* "custom, the things which are done," used with a negative, would be more accurate here.

Bomala could not be correctly used of actions felt to be shameful and unnatural, actions of which no sane and self-respecting person would be guilty. Neither does it apply to "lack of dignity and decorum," nor to actions of hazardous enjoyment, nor to pre-eminent sexual success.

Thus, by the rules of usage, this word yields a native classification of taboos into three groups: the genuine taboos with supernatural sanction, the clear prohibitions without supernatural sanction, and prohibitions of acts which must not be done because they are shameful, disgusting, or else dangerous.

The widest linguistic instrument serving to express the distinction between lawful and forbidden, and applicable to all the restrictions of our twelve classes, is given by the pair of words *bwoyna* and *gaga* (good and bad). Such general terms are naturally of loose application, cover a wide range of meanings, and gain some precision only from the context in which they are used. Thus, acts as repugnant and unspeakable as brother-sister incest, and as desirably dangerous as adultery with a chief's wife, would be called *gaga* indiscriminately. *Gaga* means, in one context, "morally unpardonable and only to be atoned by suicide"; in another, "against the law, against custom"; in others, "indecorous," "unpleasant," "ugly," "disgusting," "shameful," "dangerous," "dangerously daring," "dangerous and thus admirable."

Analogously, the word *bwoyna* means everything from "palatable," "pleasant," "seductive," "attractive because naughty" to "morally commendable because of the inherent hardships." An action which is strongly flavoured with the tempting taste of forbidden fruit might, therefore, be plausibly labelled either *bwoyna* or *gaga*, according to the mood, context, situation, and emotional twist of the sentence. So that these words—taken as isolated fragments of vocabulary—afford only a vague index to the moral statements, and do not give us even as much help in defining native views and values as the word *bomala*.

There is, perhaps, no more dangerous instrument than a native vocabulary for the unwary ethnographer to handle, if he is not assisted by a thorough working knowl-

edge of the native language, which alone enables him to control the meaning of his terms through their extensive usage in various contexts. To note down isolated terms with their translations into pidgin, and to parade such crude translations as "native categories of thought" is directly misleading. There has been no greater source of error in Anthropology than the use of misunderstood and misinterpreted fragments of a native vocabulary by observers not thoroughly conversant with native tongues and ignorant of the sociological nature of language. The misleading effects of this are most harmful in the faulty collection, in the field, of so-called systems of classificatory kinship terms, and in the reckless speculative use of such fragmentary linguistic material.[1]

To one who uses native speech freely, a clear indication of the shades of meaning implicit in the words *bwoyna* and *gaga* is given by their phonetic feeling-tone in actual utterance. This, together with the emotional inflexion of the whole sentence, the facial expression, the accompanying gestures and significant behaviour, gives a number of clearly marked distinctions in meaning. Thus, to repeat, *gaga* can express genuine moral indignation amounting to real horror, or serious considerations of a purely utilitarian nature, or, spoken with a smirk, a pleasant veniality. Such observations, however, though of the greatest value to the ethnographer for his own guidance, could be made into an unambiguous record only by means of a phonograph and cinematograph, which,

[1] This thesis will be developed in my forthcoming work on *Psychology of Kinship*, announced in the *International Library of Psychology* (Kegan Paul).

again, by the nature of the subject, it would be difficult if not impossible to use.

Fortunately, once put on his guard and instructed by direct observation of expressive tone and gesture, the ethnographer can substantiate his results from other material more easily framed into convincing documents. There exist a number of circumlocutions and more explicit phrases, which the natives volunteer in elaborating the meaning of *bwoyna* and *gaga*. Such elaborations recur independently in the statements of different men from different villages and districts. They constitute a body of linguistic evidence coinciding with emotional distinctions, and expressing these in a more communicable manner.

When speaking of the most serious offences—the brother-sister incest, forbidden fornication within the household, or open indecency between husband and wife —the natives say the word *gaga* very seriously, at times with real horror in their inflexion. Then an informant would be more explicit: *bayse sene gaga* ("this is very bad"); or *gaga, gaga,* a repetition which intensifies the sense of the word; or *gaga mokita* ("truly bad"), and add: *sene mwa'u bayse, gala tavagi* ("this is very heavy, we do not do it"). Or, again, when pressed to say what a man would feel or do if he committed such a crime, the native would usually answer: *gala!—gala tavagi—taytala ta'u ivagi—nanola bigaga, binagowa, imamata, ilo'u:* "No, we don't do it. If a man did it, his mind having turned wrong and silly, he would wake up (i.e. become sober and realize his crime) and commit suicide." Or he might say more negatively: *gala tavagi—tanum-*

waylava, or *gala tavagi—tamwasawa, bigagabile:* "We don't do it and then forget," or "We don't do it and then play round and remain light-hearted." Sometimes an ordinary informant might refuse to discuss such matters at all: *bayse gaga, gala talivala, biga gaga:* "This is bad, we don't speak about it, it is bad talk." All these stock phrases spoken seriously, or with disgust and anger, express the strongest disapproval. Experience and tact teach the observer that such subjects must never be approached with direct reference to the informant, to his sister or to his wife. Even the friendliest native, if accidentally hurt by a tactless remark of this kind, immediately departs and remains away for days. All such sentences and types of behaviour define the first meaning of the word *gaga.*

Gaga in some contexts can, therefore, mean repugnant, horrible, unspeakable; in others it refers to the naturally unpalatable and to contemptible actions which shock the natives' normal sexual impulse. Here the feeling-tone ranges from simple disgust to half-amused malice. The circumlocutions run as follows: *gala tavagi; iminayna nanogu; balagoba:* "We don't do it; my mind turns sick (if I did it); I would vomit." *Tonagowa bayse si vavagi:* "These are the acts of a mentally deficient person." *Gala tavagi, kada mwasila:* "We don't do it, because we are ashamed." *Senegaga—makawala mayna popu:* "Very bad—smells like excrement." *Makawala ka'ukwa—tomwota gala:* "In the fashion of a dog—not of a man." That is, actions worthy of a dirty animal and not of a human being.

They can give definite reasons why sexual aberrations are *bad:* in sodomy, the disgusting nature of excrement; in exhibitionism, a contemptible lack of shame and dignity; in oral perversions, the unpleasant taste and smell. All these sayings express the second meaning of the word *gaga,* "unnatural, disgusting, not worthy of a sound human being." So used, it implies an æsthetic attitude as well as a moral one, and there is less feeling that a traditional commandment has been broken than that a natural law has been flouted.

Another class of sayings defines the word *gaga* as meaning "dangerous." *Gaga—igiburu'a matauna: takokola bwaga'u, kidama igisayda, sene mwa'u—boge bikatumate:* "Bad—because that man (the aggrieved man) is angry; we are afraid of the sorcerer, if they see us (doing it), the punishment would be heavy—already we would be killed." Or again, *gala tavagi, pela guya'u,* or *pela la mwala:* "We don't do it because of the chief," or "because of the husband." Here bad means "dangerous, exposing to revenge, that which provokes the anger of the injured."

Finally, speaking of minor taboos we would be told: *Gaga pela bomala bagula:* "Bad because of the taboo of the garden." *Gaga pela kabilia: tavagi—boge iyousi kayala:* "Bad, because of war: if we do it—already the spear hits us." Here the word *gaga* qualifies a number of actions as undesirable and to be avoided, because of their specific consequences.

From this it can be seen that the classification of moral values indicated in the use of the words *bwoyna* and *gaga*

roughly corresponds to that derived from the word *bomala*.

We will now give such details concerning the taboos on our list as have not been mentioned in this and the foregoing chapters, taking them in the following order: in the next two sections, the first group of our classification, general sexual prohibitions; in sections five and six, sociological restrictions on sexual freedom.

3

THE CENSURE OF SEXUAL ABERRATIONS

The widest class of sexual activity excluded from native life is that comprising aberrations of the sexual impulse (No. 1 of the list in sec. 2). The natives regard such practices as bestiality, homosexual love and intercourse, fetishism, exhibitionism, and masturbation as but poor substitutes for the natural act, and therefore as bad and only worthy of fools. Such practices are a subject for derision, tolerant or scathing according to mood, for ribald jokes and for funny stories. Transgressions are rather whipped by public contempt than controlled by definite legal sanctions. No penalties are attached to them, nor are they believed to have any ill results on health. Nor would a native ever use the word taboo (*bomala*) when speaking of them, for it would be an insult thus to assume that any sane person would like to commit them. To ask a man seriously whether he had indulged in such practices would deeply wound his vanity and self-regard, as well as shock his natural inclination.

Vanity would be especially wounded, by the implication that he must be unable to procure the full natural enjoyment of his impulse if he has to resort to such substitutes. The Trobriander's contempt for any perversion is similar to his contempt for the man who eats inferior or impure things in place of good, clean food, or for one who suffers hunger because there is nothing in his yamhouse.

The following are typical remarks on the subject of perversions: "No man or woman in our village does it." "No one likes to penetrate excrement." "No one likes a dog better than a woman." "Only a *tonagowa* (idiot) could do it." "Only a *tonagowa* masturbates. It is a great shame; we know then that no woman wants to copulate with him; a man who does it, we know, cannot get hold of a woman." In all native statements the unsatisfactory nature of a substitute or makeshift is emphasized, and the implication is of poverty as well as of mental and sexual deficiency. The natives would also quote instances such as that of Orato'u, the village clown of Omarakana, deformed and defective in speech; the several albinos and a few specially ugly women; and say that such people, but not an ordinary man or woman, might practise one perversion or another.

Of course, we know that such statements of a general and absolute rule express a figment, an ideal, which, in reality, is only imperfectly satisfied. Most of these aberrations are practised, though to a very limited extent, just as the deficient and ugly are not entirely excluded from the normal exercise of their sexual functions (see also ch. x, sec. 2).

Let us now consider different types of perversion.

Homosexuality.—This orientation of the sexual impulse, if it exists at all among the Trobrianders, can be found only in its more spiritual manifestation, that is, in emotional and Platonic friendships. It is allowed by custom, and is, indeed, usual, for boy friends to embrace one another, to sleep together on the same couch, to walk enlaced or arm-in-arm. In the personal friendships which to the natives naturally express themselves by such bodily contacts, strong preferences are displayed. Boys are often seen in couples: Monakewo and Toviyamata, Mekala'i and Tobutusawa, Dipapa and Burayama, most of whom are now familiar to my readers, were constantly to be seen together. Sometimes such a friendship is just a passing whim, but it may survive and mature into a permanent relationship of mutual affection and assistance, as did that between Bagido'u and Yobukwa'u, and, I was told, between Mitakata and Namwana Guya'u before these two became implacable enemies. The word *lubaygu*, "my friend," is used for such close alliances between man and man, and it is remarkable that this word also designates the love relation between man and woman. But it would be as erroneous to consider this identity in language as implying an identity in emotional content as it would be to assume that every time a Frenchman uses the word *ami*, a homosexual relation is implied, simply because of its connotation when used by one sex of another. In France, as in the Trobriands, context and situation distinguish the two uses of the word *ami* (*lubaygu*) and makes them into two semantically different words.

Difficult as it is exactly to draw the line between pure "friendship" and "homosexual relation" in any society—both because of laxity in definition and because of the difficulty of ascertaining the facts—it becomes almost impossible in a community such as the Trobriands. Personally, I find it misleading to use the term "homosexuality" in the vague and almost intentionally all-embracing sense that is now fashionable under the influence of psycho-analysis and the apostles of "*Urning*" love. If inversion be defined as a relationship in which detumescence is regularly achieved by contact with a body of the same sex, then the male friendships in the Trobriands are not homosexual, nor is inversion extensively practised in the islands. For, as we know, the practice is really felt to be bad and unclean because it is associated with excreta, for which the natives feel a genuine disgust. And while the ordinary caresses of affection are approved as between members of the same sex, any erotic caresses, scratching, nibbling at eyelashes, or labial contact would be regarded as revolting.

As we have said, there is always some discrepancy between theory and practice; but in estimating the importance of exceptions, we must allow for unnatural conditions of life and the influence of other civilizations. Many natives are, under the present rule of whites, cooped up in gaol, on mission stations, and in plantation barracks. Sexes are separated and normal intercourse made impossible; yet an impulse trained to function regularly cannot be thwarted. The white man's influence and his morality, stupidly misapplied where there is no

place for it, creates a setting favourable to homosexuality. The natives are perfectly well aware that venereal disease and homosexuality are among the benefits bestowed on them by Western culture.

Although it is impossible for me to quote any well-authenticated instance of this perversion from the old times, I have no doubt that sporadic cases have always occurred. Indeed, the existence of such expressions as *ikaye popu:* "he copulates excrement," *ikaye pwala:* "he penetrates rectum," and the well-defined moral attitude towards it, are sufficient evidence of this. Some informants would go so far as to admit that homosexuality had been practised formerly, but they would always insist that it was only by mentally deficient people. On the whole, therefore, it is clear that this prohibition is not imposed upon an unwilling moral acceptance, but is well entrenched in the feeling and natural impulse of the natives. How far this attitude is correlated with the wide and varied opportunities for normal intercourse; how far it is true that homosexuality is more efficiently eradicated by derision than by heavy penalties, are questions which can only be submitted as a subject for further observations in the field.[1]

Bestiality.—This is derided as an unclean and unsatisfactory makeshift, even more incongruous and comical than inversion. It is remarkable that among a totemic people—who claim affinity with animals, and treat the pig as a member of the household—animal sodomy should

[1] Cf. the writer's *Sex and Repression in Savage Societies,* 1927, where the problem has been discussed at length in part ii.

still be regarded as a dirty and unnatural practice. The natives see no continuity or relation between totemic marriage and intercourse, on the one hand, as these took place in mythological times, and, on the other, what might be called totemic fornication at the present day.

A well-documented case of bestiality is on record, however, concerning a man who copulated with a dog. It is noteworthy that the case is famous throughout the district, that the name of the man, all the circumstances, and even the name of the dog "Jack" are household words in every village. It is also interesting that, while it is always described or alluded to with considerable amusement, there are clear indications that the matter would not be in the least amusing if it concerned oneself or a kinsman or friend. "If I did it, or any one of my maternal kinsmen or friends, I would commit suicide." Yet the culprit, Moniyala, has lived down his shame. He leads a happy existence in Sinaketa, where I had the pleasure of meeting him, and having a long conversation with him. The subject of his past lapse, however, must never be mentioned in his presence, for, the natives say, if he heard anyone speaking about it he would commit *lo'u* (suicide by jumping from a tree).

The circumstances of this case were as follows: Moniyala was serving with a trader who owned a male dog called Jack. The two became friendly and, one day, a girl saw Moniyala sodomizing the dog on the beach. A scandal broke out, the native missionary preacher brought the matter before the white resident magistrate who placed Moniyala in gaol for six months. After his

release Moniyala signed on for plantation work abroad and stayed on the mainland of New Guinea for several years. When he came back he was able to brazen it out; but everybody seems to think that, in old days, he would have committed suicide. The natives agree that a dog is worse than a pig, the former being the uncleaner animal.

Sadism and masochism.—Whether these complementary perversions play a large part in the sexual life of the natives I am unable to say. The cruel forms of caress—scratching, biting, spitting—to which a man has to submit to a greater extent even than the woman, show that, as elements in eroticism, they are not absent from native love-making. On the other hand, flagellation as an erotic practice is entirely unknown; and the idea that cruelty, actively given or passively accepted, could lead, of itself alone, to pleasant detumescence is incomprehensible, nay ludicrous, to the natives. I should say, therefore, that these perversions do not exist in a crystallized form.

Fellatio.—This is probably practised in the intimacy of love-making (see above, ch. x, sec. 12). Receiving my information exclusively from men, I was told that no male would touch the female genitals in this manner, but, at the same time, I was assured that *penilinctus* was extensively practised. I do not feel convinced, however, of the truth of this masculine version. The expression, *ikanumwasi kalu momona,* "lapping up the sexual discharges," designates both forms of fellatio.

Masturbation (*ikivayni kwila:* "he manipulates penis," *isulumomoni:* "he makes semen boil over") is a recognized practice often referred to in jokes. The natives

maintain, however, that it would be done only by an idiot (*tonagowa*) or one of the unfortunate albinos, or one defective in speech; in other words, only by those who cannot obtain favours from women. The practice is therefore regarded as undignified and unworthy of a man, but in a rather amused and entirely indulgent manner. Exactly the same attitude is adopted towards female masturbation (*ikivayni wila:* "she manipulates cunnus"; *ibasi wila o yamala:* "she pierces vagina with her hand").

Nocturnal pollutions and dreams have already been mentioned (see ch. xii, sec. 1). They are regarded, as we know, as the result of magic and a proof of its effectiveness.

Exhibitionism is regarded by the natives with genuine contempt and disgust: this has already been made clear in the above description of the manner of dressing and the careful adjustment of the male pubic leaf and feminine grass skirt.

In the treatment of these deviations of the sexual impulse, it is impossible to draw a rigid line between the use of certain practices—such as fellatio, passionate and exuberant caresses, interest in the genitals—when they are used as preliminary and preparatory sexual approaches on the one hand, and as definite perversions on the other. The best criterion is whether they function as a part of courting, leading up to normal copulation, or whether they are sufficient by themselves for the production of detumescence. It is well to remember in this context that the nervous excitability of the natives is much less than ours, and their sexual imagination is relatively very

sluggish; that excitation and tumescence are usually achieved only by the direct visual, olfactory, or tactual stimulus of the sexual organs; and that orgasm, in man or woman, requires more bodily contact, erotic preliminaries, and, above all, direct friction of the mucous membranes for its production. It is, therefore, plausible to assume that preparatory erotic approaches with the natives would have less tendency to pass into autonomous acts, that is to develop into perversions, than is the case among nervously more excitable races.

4

MODESTY IN SPEECH AND BEHAVIOUR

On the subject of general decorum (No. 2 of the list in sec. 2) in sexual matters, there is little to add to the information given in previous chapters; and a brief summary will suffice to bring the facts to mind. Decency in speech and behaviour varies according to the relation in which the members of any company stand to each other. The presence of a sister and brother imposes a rigid propriety in social tone and conversation; and, to a lesser extent, so does that of maternal cousins and members of the same clan. Again, when a woman is accompanied by her husband, a strict etiquette must be observed. The wife's sister is also an embarrassing companion; and in a lesser degree so is the wife's mother or any of her near maternal relatives. In the presence of a chief, commoners may not joke or use obscene expressions. The degree of verbal freedom permitted is determined by the degree

of intimacy and length of acquaintance. Many a time have I seen my most ribald friends sit demure, polite, and dignified, discussing such subjects as weather, health, the amenities of travel, the welfare of mutual friends and other universal subjects of small talk, because of the presence of strangers from overseas or from some distant inland district. When these had gone away the conversation was apt to assume a specially hilarious tone to compensate for this polite reticence.

But though licence in speech is allowed and enjoyed in the right company, great restraint is always observed in public as regards action. In vain would one look in the Trobriands for traces and survivals of the untrammelled licence and lust alleged to have existed in primeval times. With the one possible exception of the Southern *kayasa* (ch. ix, sec. 5) there are no public orgies in which men and women would copulate in the sight of all present, orgies which have been reported from other parts of Melanesia. The myths and legendary customs which we have described are, of course, irrelevant, and even these are not really concerned with public orgies for the satisfaction of lust. To the natives sexual publicity is definitely objectionable. They will say that they are "ashamed to do or even to speak about such things," that "such things are like those of a dog." In the bachelors' house (see ch. iii, sec. 4) considerable attention is devoted to the maintenance of an exclusive privacy. All this is in harmony with the natives' strict attention to modesty in dress.

Even courting is conducted most decorously. Scenes

of frequent occurrence in any public park in Europe, after dark or even before, would never be seen in a Trobriand village. Holding hands, leaning against each other, embracing—gestures which, as we know, are not considered objectionable as between boys and are frequently seen between girls—are not permitted to lovers in public. I observed once or twice that Yobukwa'u and his betrothed used to lie together on a mat in broad daylight, decorously, but unmistakably leaning against each other and holding hands, in a manner which we would find perfectly natural in a pair of lovers soon to be married. But when I mentioned this in discussing the whole subject with some natives, I was told at once that it was a new fashion and not correct according to old custom. Tokolibeba, once a famous Don Juan, now a peppery old conservative and stickler for proprieties, insisted that this was *misinari si bubunela*, "missionary fashion," one of those novel immoralities introduced by Christianity. He spoke with as much feeling and righteous indignation as the late Rev. C. M. Hyde of Honolulu might have used against heathen pruriency.

We can now understand better the value of erotic games to the native. The bodily contacts afforded by them are appreciated just because, under ordinary circumstances, they cannot be indulged. All preliminary erotic approaches must be carried out under cover of darkness. And since much of the love magic, with which they are so often fortified, requires close bodily contact (see chs. x and xi) the games are there to provide it. Nipples are touched with a magic-covered palm, a charmed finger

is inserted into the vagina, or an enchanted perfume held below the nostrils, discreetly in the dark, as the game gives opportunity. It is always suspected but never seen; even when quarrels and litigations arise because some such attempt to wile away affection is alleged, it is difficult to find a witness of the act.

This by-way of native practice gives incidentally a good illustration of the dangers which beset the ethnologist. In the early days of my field-work, my cook, Ubi'ubi, whom I had imported from the South Coast of New Guinea, was accused of digital insertion by the local natives. At this time I did most of my work in pidgin English, and I find in my notes that my interpreter informed me that his action had a special native name: "Boy he call him *kaynobasi wila*," that is to say: "The custom is named by the native the piercing through the vulva." I could not understand why among these easy-going people this action should arouse such strong moral feeling, and I made an entry in my notes: "The custom of inserting a finger into the vagina is morally very reprehensible to the natives." Thus, ignorance of the language and a superficial acquaintance with the natives led me completely astray. To put the whole incident in its proper perspective, it was necessary to understand the native attitude towards decorum in general and, in particular, their beliefs about erotic enchantment by magic. It was not so much that my cook-boy allowed himself a somewhat unseemly gesture, but rather that he was suspected of exercising a powerful form of magic to alienate the girl's affections from her usual lover.

Thus behaviour between the sexes conforms to a definite standard of decorum, which, needless to say, is not the same as morality. Speech, on the other hand, is given a much more generous margin of freedom. Relative latitudes in speech and behaviour would make an interesting investigation for comparative ethnology, for they do not seem to develop along parallel lines. Indeed, greater freedom of speech, acting as a safety valve, may be associated with greater restraint in behaviour, and vice versa.[1]

In an appropriate social setting, sex is quite a favourite topic of conversation. Ribald jokes, indecent gossip and anecdotes are a recognized form of entertainment, as we saw in connection with sexual folk-lore. In this, as in everything else, I found considerable individual differences. Some natives were sober in speech and not much interested in sexual ribaldry; others specialized, so to speak, in obscene speech and doubtful jokes. The sense of humour, also, varied greatly from man to man, from the morose and unsmiling churl or the naïve good-natured simpleton, to the man with real wit and humour, always ready for a joke, able to tell a good story, and seldom taking offence unless it was meant. With Paluwa and his son Monakewo, with Tokulubakiki and Kayla'i, I could indulge in a considerable amount of mutual "ragging"; they would never misunderstand an allusion or a joke, and often they made me laugh with an apt observation, turned against myself and not always devoid of malice. Again there are the chartered village clowns, some of whom like Orato'u, the idiot of Omarakana,

[1] Cf. *Sex and Repression*, part ii.

turn their speech impediment to advantage, while others, whose humour is of the crude and impudent kind, play practical jokes, shout out their witticisms, take liberties even with men of high rank, or imitate, sometimes quite cleverly, peculiarities of well-known persons.

But in all grades of humour, sexual jokes and allusions play an important part. When no people of the forbidden degrees are present, sexual matters are discussed without circumlocution; anatomical and physiological expressions, phrases denoting perversions and peculiarities are freely used.

I shall quote only a few typical sayings to indicate how this type of remark enters into daily conversation. In the excitement of games or of communal work, the native will express intense general enjoyment by exclaiming: *agudeydes, akay kwim!* "hullo, fornicate thy penis!" or, if addressing a female, *wim, kasesam!* "thy cunnus, thy clitoris!" A humorous expression is: *yakay, puwagu!* "oo, my testicles!" Exclamatory phrases referring to private parts with embellishments are often jocularly exchanged between friends, much as we might say: "damn your eyes!"

We have already met several such typical jesting allusions in the fairy tales, especially in the song of the reef heron to the old woman, Ilakavetega (see ch. xii, sec. 3). The interest taken in malformations of the private parts is to be found also in the story about the man with the long penis, the woman who stows away food in her vagina, and the old mother endowed with five clitorises. In actual life a native will say jocularly: *kwaypwase wim,*

"decomposed thy cunnus"; or *wim ipwase*, "thy cunnus is decomposed"; or *kwaybulabola wim*, "enormously enlarged is thy cunnus"; or, for a change, *kwaypatu wim*, "contracted is thy cunnus." And to a man: *kaykukupi kwim*, "very small is thy penis"; *kaygatu kwim*, "dirty is thy penis"; *kalu nau'u kwim*, "covered with stale discharge is thy penis"; *kaypaki kwim*, "sore-covered is thy penis." Apart from jokes, the natives take a great interest in supposed malformations or advantageous increments and developments of the sexual organs. Thus, to a man of high rank and of great reputation will be attributed an extraordinarily long and stout organ. The late paramount chief, Numakala, was credited with a penis which used to grow in length during copulation and become swollen and round like a ball at the end. This was counted to his credit and treated seriously as an enviable erotic asset.

Incongruity in sexual matters is a frequent subject for jokes. Thus possible or imputed copulation with women famed for their repulsiveness, such as Tilapo'i or Kurayana, is, as we know, a frequent form of jocular address. *Kwoy Tilapo'i!* "copulate with Tilapo'i!" is a very mild form of abuse; or a friend coming from the direction of her village might be hailed, *Boge kukaye Tilapo'i?* "Hast thou already copulated with Tilapo'i?" The slightest inaccuracy or imagined inaccuracy in the set of the pubic leaf is immediately seized upon: *Yavim boge ipwase—tagise puwam*, "thy pubic leaf is out of order—let us see thy testicles." Similar jokes are made about insufficiently shaven pubic hair and about alleged fornication with some

old woman or a chief's wife. Taunts implying intensity or illicitness of copulation are frequent: *tokakayta yoku, tokaylasi yoku, tosuvasova yoku,* "Thou fornicator, thou adulterer, thou incest-committer."

All these remarks, however, are primarily used in friendly banter from which serious and offensive forms of abuse must be distinguished. Swearing is used in the Trobriands, as with us, as a substitute reaction to minor annoyances, and is so used against things or people without giving serious offence. The strongest forms of abusive language would not, however, be used on such trivial occasions. Swearing in anger may lead to serious consequences when the temper of those concerned is not under control. It may lead to a more or less prolonged breach of personal relations, to a fight, or even to a communal feud. Or, again, abuse can be used deliberately to shame or to startle people by putting their misdeeds before them in strong language. This is done when a grievance is real and serious enough to be brought up against the offender to check him, but not so grave and shameful as to entail such tragic consequences as a broken relationship or suicide. Thus a wife might shame a husband suspected of misconduct by using against him in public the various circumlocutions and direct expressions for adultery. She would do so only in a narrow circle of friends, breaking, for this moral purpose, the usual restraint which a woman has to observe with regard to her husband. Or, again, a matrilineal uncle might use this method to reprimand his nephew for minor cases of exogamous breach; or a father might reprove his daughter for too indiscriminate or too

aggressive fornication. Such reprimands would not be administered in the presence of many people, but, in their appropriate setting of friends or relatives, they play an important part in the regulation of tribal life. *Kakayuwa*, "to shame," "to startle," "to shake up," and *yakala*, "to have it out with someone," are the words used to describe such proceedings.[1]

In such admonitory accusations certain abusive terms are used, such as adulterer (*tokaylasi*), breaker of incest (*tosuvasova*); or, to a woman, wanton (*nakakayta*) or drab (*nakaytabwa*). The same terms can be used, not in well-meant and deliberate reprimand, but as abuse meant to hurt and to hurt only; and if, thus used, they happen really to apply, the insult is doubly serious. For the truth, in the Trobriands as elsewhere, is the cruelest and most fatal instrument of malice.

Bad language is also used in certain expressions of specific abuse meant only to offend and not, as a rule, bearing any relation to fact, as they often refer to acts almost impracticable. Most such expressions begin with the characteristic imperative so widespread throughout swearing humanity: in this case, "Copulate with . . . ," followed by various unsuitable persons as putative objects for erotic approach—sometimes a repulsive person, sometimes a dog, sometimes an unattractive part of the body. This is the most innocuous form of this kind of abuse, and is only offensive if offence is intended. It becomes really

[1] Compare *Crime and Custom,* ch. xii, for further data referring to *yakala* and the part played by verbal accusation in the regulation of tribal life, and *Sex and Repression,* part ii, ch. iv, on the subject of bad language.

serious when a sociologically forbidden person is inserted as object. The two incestuous imperatives *kwoy inam*, "copulate with thy mother," and *kwoy lumuta*, "copulate with thy sister," with *kwoy um kwava*, "copulate with thy wife," form the fundamental trio of this category. The first invitation can be merely a joke and is often used in good-natured abuse or at times sharply and with annoyance, but never implies serious offence. It is also a common impersonal expletive, such as our "bloody" or "damn."

Used with reference to the sister, it is an unpardonable offence when addressed to a person, and is felt to be so pregnant with dangerous consequences that it is never used impersonally as a mere expletive. And when the real name of the sister or brother is inserted—for the word *lumuta* means thy sister when a man speaks and thy brother when a woman speaks—it is the second worst offence imaginable to a Trobriander. Remarkably enough, even stronger is the expression: "Copulate with thy wife." This is so unmentionable to the natives that, in spite of my scientific interest in bad language, I was very long without knowing that it existed and, even in telling me this expression, my informants were serious, subdued, and unwilling to dwell on the subject. Their attitude to this phrase is correlated with the rule that the erotic life of husband and wife should always remain completely concealed, and it has a special indecency in that it refers to an action which does as a matter of fact take place.

Another form of typical abuse is "Eat your excrement," with several variants which we have already men-

tioned in this chapter. A third category, also familiar to us (see ch. vii, sec. 6), is the assertion of physical similarity to any maternal relative, and worst of all, of course, to the sister. *Migim lumuta*, "Thy face thy sister's," is one of the worst insults possible.

Blasphemy, strictly speaking, does not exist, although the natives say that they would not use indecent expressions with regard to ancestral spirits and that, both in this world and after they have left it, they would use very guarded language about Topileta (see ch. xii, sec. 5).

The native words for swearing or abuse are *kamtoki* and *kayluki* used with reflective personal plurals. Thus *ikaylukwaygu* or *ikamtokaygu* means "he is abusing me." Another expression *ikavitagi yagagu* means literally, "He has fouled my name," or, when similarity with a maternal relative has been referred to, *ikavitagi migigu*, "he has befouled my face." In all swearing the addition of the name of the person abused, and, when it is a sociological insult, of the sister, wife or mother, adds considerably to the strength of the insult.

In this and in other contexts we find that whenever the natives touch on something that has really happened, greater restraint is necessary and allusions and abuse become much more poignant. A man will talk freely about himself and his own erotic affairs—in fact the confidences of my various friends have furnished the best material for the present book—but even in this there were limits; and of the incestuous or adulterous or tabooed intrigues of many of my acquaintances I had to learn, not from them, but from their best friends. Here again, though such

gossip would be retailed freely behind the man's back, it would never be spoken of, to his face. The incestuous affairs of the chief's sons in Omarakana, the hopeless matrimonial prospects of Monakewo or Mekala'i were never spoken about in their presence. Delicacy in touching upon the intimate concerns of those present is as great among the Trobrianders as among well-bred people in Europe.

We now pass to No. 3 in our classification of taboos, disapproval of sexual greed and lechery (see list in sec. 2). Inability to master desire, leading to insistent and aggressive sexuality, is regarded with contempt both in man and in woman, though it is felt to be really repugnant only in women. Thus Yakalusa, a daughter of a chief of Kasana'i, was accused of spontaneously approaching men, talking to them, and inviting them to have intercourse with her. A similar reputation attached to several girls in Omarakana. Again there are clear cases on record of nymphomaniacs, who could not be satisfied with moderate sexual intercourse and required a number of men every night. There was a girl of Kitava who actually made the round of the main island in search of erotic diversion. While I was staying in Sinaketa she also was a visitor there and gossip was very active though not specially antagonistic. It was said that she would go out into the jungle with a group of boys and withdraw with one after another, spending days and nights in this occupation.

It must be made clear, exactly what it is that the natives find reprehensible about sexual greed in a woman. It is certainly not her interest in fornication, nor is it the

fact that she initiates the intrigue; they object to direct invitation in place of the more seemly method of seduction by magic, and to the unsuccess and small sense of personal worth that such urgent solicitation implies.

The native term for such women is *nakaytabwa* (drab), which was thus elaborated to me: *sene bidubadu tomwota ikakayta; gala ilukwali kalu bulabola—sene nakaytabwa.* This might be rendered: "Very many men she copulates with; not satisfied is ever her large orifice—such a one we call a drab." Here we get a direct mention of sexual insatiability; in other words, an expression of the idea of nymphomania.

Two alternative expressions for *nakaytabwa* are *nakakayta* (literally, "female copulator"), and the expression *naka'ulatile* ("wanton") which was explained to me as follows:

Kidama tayta vivila gala imaymaysi tau'a'u,
Supposing one woman no they come men,
ilolo wala titolela imwayki ta'u—
she goes indeed herself she comes to man—
yagala naka'ulatile.
her name wanton.

Or freely: "When a woman has no men who come to her, and takes the initiative and goes herself to a man, we call her a wanton." It is clear that the moral censure incurred by such women is founded on the shame that attaches to erotic unsuccess.

Censure of lechery in a man has the same foundation. *Tokokolosi* is the word used to denote a man who pursues

women and inflicts his attentions on them. An interesting instance occurred in my own experience. After about eighteen months' absence, I returned to Omarakana and resumed my old acquaintance with Namwana Guya'u. He, as we know, had been worsted by Mitakata and hated him impotently, therefore he sought to blacken him in my eyes, and brought the most venomous possible charge against him:

Tokokolosi matauna ibia vivila: boge
A rutter this man he pulls women: already
ipakayse kumaydona. Minana ipayki,
they refuse all. This woman refuses,
matauna iyousi, ibia.
this man catches, pulls.

To make the picture really sinister Namwana Guya'u added a touch of exhibitionism to it:

Iliku yavila, bitotona kwila;
He undoes pubic leaf his, it stands up penis his;
iluki vivila: "Kuma kwabukwani
he tells (to a) woman: "Come get hold (of)
kwigu." Boge ipakayse vivila,
penis mine." Already they refuse women,
pela tokokolosi vivila.
because satyr (towards) women.

In free translation: "He undoes his pubic leaf, and allows his penis to become erect. He then tells a woman:

'Come and caress my penis.' Women already are disgusted with him because he is such a satyr."

In this one text we find an expression of the native contempt for exhibitionism, insistent pursuit of women, and unsuccess in love; and women's dislike of too eager attentions. We have, also, the interesting association between the removal of the pubic leaf and erection.

The whole attitude of the Trobriander towards sexual excess displays an appreciation of restraint and dignity, and an admiration for success; not only for what it gives to a man, but because it means that he is above any need for active aggression. The moral command not to violate, solicit, or touch is founded on a strong conviction that it is shameful; and shameful because real worth lies in being coveted, in conquering by charm, by beauty and by magic. Thus all the threads of our account weave into one complex pattern; manners, morals, and æsthetic judgment fit into the psychology of love-making and of conquest by magic.

If I were allowed to go beyond the scope of the present study, I should like to demonstrate that the same pattern is also found in the psychology of economic and ceremonial give-and-take, and in the native views concerning reciprocity in legal obligation. Everywhere we find disapproval of direct solicitation, of covetousness and cupidity, and, above all, the dishonour attaching to real need and dearth. Plenty, on the other hand, and wealth, combined with a careless generosity in giving, are glorious.[1]

[1] Cf. the analysis of economic psychology in *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*, ch. vi, and *passim*, and of the principle of reciprocity in *Crime and Custom*.

The only category of taboos in our general list which now remains is No. 5 of our list in section 2, that comprising miscellaneous prohibitions arising out of special occasions in tribal life. When engaged in warfare, men must abstain from sexual intercourse whether with wife or paramour. The taboo becomes operative from the day when, with a special ceremony called *vatula bulami*, the forces are mustered and war magic is set in motion. Not only must a man abstain from any sexual intercourse, but he is not allowed to sleep on the same mat or on the same bedstead with a woman. Certain houses are reserved for men, while the women and children congregate in others. Any amorous dalliance at such a time would be regarded as dangerous to the community's chances of winning the war, and therefore as shameful and unseemly. Further, there are definite penalties which would fall on the individual transgressor. Should he indulge in intercourse, a hostile spear would pierce his penis or his testicles. Should he sleep nose to nose with his sweetheart, he would be hit on the nose or thereabouts. Were he to sit even on the same mat with a girl, his buttocks would not be safe from attack. I had the impression from the way in which my informants spoke about the matter, that the war taboos were fully and rigorously observed. No doubt the men were far too engrossed in the excitement of the fighting to turn any attention to the more usual and therefore, perhaps, less absorbing sport of love.

The gardens should not be in any way associated with amorous advances. Neither within the enclosure proper

nor anywhere near it, should a man and a woman be found love-making. In the phrase for describing illicit love-making the belt of bush adjoining the garden (*tokeda*) is specified (see pl. 88). To have intercourse in or near the gardens is called by the natives *isikayse tokeda*, "they sit down upon the belt of bush adjoining the garden." Particularly objectionable are any advances on the part of men during the garden work which is especially done by women: the *pwakova* ("weeding") and the *koumwali* ("clearing of the ground before planting"). It will be remembered that the legendary fornicator, Inuvayla'u, was wont to approach the women when engaged on this and other specifically feminine occupations and that this was one of the worst traits in his character. It is improper for a man even to be present during any of these occupations: communal weeding or clearing, collecting shells, fetching water, gathering firewood from the bush, the ceremonial making of fibre petticoats. Intercourse in the gardens is punished by a special visitation: the bush pigs are attracted by the smell of seminal fluid, they break through the fences and destroy the gardens.

A special taboo enjoins chastity on women who remain at home while their husbands and lovers are away on a *kula* expedition. Any infidelity affects the speed of their husbands' canoes and causes them to move very slowly (see also above, ch. v, sec. 2). The taboos imposed during pregnancy and after childbirth have already been described in detail (see ch. viii), as well as the aversion (not fortified by supernatural penalties) from intercourse

during menstruation. This concludes our survey of the general taboos, and we now proceed to special prohibitions associated with kinship and relationship by marriage.

5

EXOGAMY AND THE PROHIBITION OF INCEST

The sociological regulations which divide persons of the opposite sex into lawful and unlawful in relation to one another; which restrain intercourse in virtue of the legal act of marriage and which discriminate between certain unions in respect of their desirability, have to be distinguished from the taboos of a general nature already described. In these we found expressions of disapproval, ranging from horror to distaste, of certain sexual acts and approaches, defined physiologically or by the occasion on which they occur. The rules to which we now proceed can be stated only with reference to social organization, and above all to the institution of family and the division into totemic clans.[1]

The totemic organization of the natives is simple and symmetrical in its general outline. Humanity is divided into four clans (*kumila*). Totemic nature is conceived to be as deeply ingrained in the substance of the individual as sex, colour, and stature. It can never be changed, and it transcends individual life, for it is carried over into the next world, and brought back unchanged

[1] The institution of marriage is inseparable from the family and will, therefore, be mentioned incidentally in what follows. It has already been treated in some detail with the taboos and regulations which it entails (cf. chs. iv, v, and vi, and the penultimate section of this chapter).

into this one when the spirit returns by reincarnation. This fourfold totemic division is thought to be universal, embracing every section of mankind. When a European arrives in the Trobriands, the natives simply and sincerely ask to which of the four classes he belongs, and it is not easy to explain to the most intelligent among them that the totemic fourfold division is not universal and rooted in the nature of man. The natives of neighbouring areas, where there are more than four clans, are invariably and readily made to conform to the fourfold scheme by allocating several of the alien clans to each one of the four Trobriand divisions. For such subordination of minor groups to the larger divisions there is a pattern in Trobriand culture, since each of their big totemic clans comprises smaller groups called *dala*, or, as we shall call them, "sub-clans."

The sub-clans are at least as important as the clans, for the members of the same sub-clan regard themselves as real kindred, claim the same rank, and form the local unit in Trobriand society. Each local community is composed of people belonging to one sub-clan, and to one sub-clan only, who have joint rights to the village site, to the surrounding garden-lands, and to a number of local privileges. Large villages are compounded of several minor local units, but each unit has its own compact site within the village and owns a large contiguous area of garden-land. There are even different terms to denote membership within the sub-clan and membership in the clan. People of the same sub-clan are real kinsmen, and call one another *veyogu*, my kinsman. But a man will only

apply this term loosely and metaphorically to one who, though a member of the same clan, belongs to a different sub-clan, and will, if questioned directly, inform you that the other man is only pseudo-kindred, using the deprecatory term *kakaveyogu* (my spurious kinsman).

Each of the four clans has its own name: Malasi, Lukuba, Lukwasisiga, Lukulabuta. Such a clan name is used by a man or a woman as a definition of his or of her social identity: "My name is so-and-so, and I am a Malasi." There are special combinations of the clan names with formative roots, to describe men and women and the mixed plurality belonging to the same clan: Tomalasi—a Malasi man; Immalasi—a Malasi woman; Memalasi—the Malasi people; Tolukuba—a Lukuba man; Imkuba—a Lukuba woman; Milukuba—the Lukuba people, and so on. When a man says *Tomalasi yaygu*, he gives a sociological definition of his place within the universal fourfold division of mankind, and he also thereby settles his associations in any community to which he has recently arrived. To a native this statement indicates a number of personal characteristics as well, or at least potentialities: such as magical knowledge, citizenship (when the sub-clan is also mentioned), moral and intellectual propensities, historical antecedents, relation to certain animals and plants and also an indication of rank. Thus the Malasi claim primacy among other totemic divisions, though this is only very grudgingly granted by members of other clans.

The Malasi have, however, a good piece of heraldic evidence in their favour. Near the village of Laba'i, on

ANCESTRAL EMERGENCE SPOT IN A SMALL VILLAGE ON THE ISLAND OF VAKUTA

[*Ch. XIII, 5*]

the northern shore of the main island, there is a spot called Obukula, which is marked by a coral outcrop. Obukula is, in fact, a "hole" (*dubwadebula*), or "house" (*bwala*); that is to say, one of the points from which the first ancestors of a lineage emerged. For before they appeared on this earth, human beings led a subterranean existence similar in all respects to life in surface Trobriand villages and organized on the same social pattern. They dwelt in identical local communities, were divided into clans and sub-clans, were grouped into districts, and lived as good a family life as do present-day natives. They also owned property—that is *gugu'a*, the workaday implements and chattels, and *vaygu'a*, "valuables," and houses, canoes, and land. They practised arts and crafts and possessed specific magic.

Now, when they decided to come up to the surface of the earth, they collected all their belongings and emerged in the locality of which they wanted to take possession. The spot of their emergence is usually marked by a grotto, a large boulder, a pool, the head of a tidal creek, or merely a large stone in the village centre or street (see pl. 89). In this way they established the traditional claim to ownership of the "hole" and its surroundings; that is, of the village site, which often lies immediately round the hole, of the adjoining lands, and of the economic privileges and pursuits associated with the locality. It is the rule in Trobriand mythology that, originally, only one couple emerged from each such "hole," a brother and a sister; she to start the lineage, he to protect her and look after her affairs. Thus the rule is: one clan, one

village, one portion of garden-land, one system of gardening and fishing magic, one pair of brother and sister ancestors, one rank and one pedigree. This latter can never be really traced, but it is firmly believed to go back to the original woman who came out of the hole.

To this "one-hole-one-line-one-sub-clan" rule there is only one exception, the hole of Obukula already mentioned. In this case we have one hole for the four main clans; we have ancestors who are defined not by sub-clan but by their clan identity; and we have an act of emergence which established not a special form of citizenship and ownership, not privileges for one sub-clan, but the respective position of the four clans in the scale of rank.

The myth of the hole of Obukula runs thus. First the representative of the Lukulabuta, its totemic animal the *Kaylavasi* (iguana or giant lizard), came to the surface, scratching away the earth as these animals will do. He ran up a tree and from this point of vantage waited for what should follow. Nor did he have to wait long. Through the hole he had made scrambled the dog, the animal of the Lukuba clan, who, the second on the scene, obtained the highest rank for the time being. His glory was short-lived, however, for soon afterwards came the pig: that noble animal, very close to man himself in rank, and representative of the Malasi. The last to appear was the animal of the Lukwasisiga clan, variously described as the snake, the opossum, or the crocodile. The myths disagree as to its identity and indeed this ambiguous animal plays the least important part in the story and in Trobriand totemism.

The pig and the dog played together; and the dog, running through the bush, saw the fruit of a plant called *noku*. This is considered by the natives a very inferior form of nourishment, and although it is not specifically forbidden to any clan or person, it is eaten only in times of greatest dearth and famine. The dog smelt it, licked it, and ate it. The pig seized his opportunity, and then and there laid down the charter of his rank, saying: "Thou eatest *noku*, thou eatest excrement; thou art a low-bred commoner. Henceforth I shall be the *guya'u*, the chief." From this incident dates the Malasi claim to rank higher than the other clans, and one of their sub-clans, the Tabalu, have, indeed, the highest position; they are the real chiefs, acknowledged to be of supreme rank, not by the Trobriands only, but by the adjoining areas as well.

Thus do the natives account for the difference in rank. The partaking of unclean food—the most important criterion of social inferiority—caused the downfall of the Lukuba, and the rise of the Malasi. But it must be remembered that this latter clan includes besides the highest sub-clan (the Tabalu), that one which is most despised, associated with the village of Bwaytalu. No respectable Lukuba man would marry a Malasi woman from that village; no Tabalu would claim kinship with any one of its inhabitants, and he takes it very badly when it is pointed out that they are his *kakaveyola* (pseudo-kindred). The natives of the several local communities in the compound village of Bwaytalu, Ba'u, and Suviyagila form, as we have already mentioned, a practically endogamous district in which the members of the various clans have to

observe exogamy within their circle of villages, since they cannot mate outside it. We have thus an endogamous district within which totemic exogamy is observed.

Thus in respect of rank, it is the sub-clan rather than the clan that matters, and this holds good with regard to local rights and privileges. In a village community which belongs to the Lukwasisiga of the Kwaynama sub-clan, only members of the latter are citizens. Others of the Lukwasisiga clan, who do not belong to that sub-clan are no more at home there than the Malasi or the Lukuba would be. The clan, therefore, is primarily a social category rather than a group, a category in which a number of animals, plants, and other natural objects are placed. But the totemic nature of a clan is not of great importance, and its religious significance is very much overshadowed by its social functions. The clan as a whole is to be seen at work only in certain big ceremonies, when all the sub-clans of the Malasi or Lukuba or Lukwasisiga or Lukulabuta act together and support one another.

It was necessary to give a somewhat detailed and concrete account of clan and sub-clan, of their organization, mythology, and social functions, in order to present them as living and effective units rather than as a mere numerical scheme ornamented by native names. The aspect of clan organization, however, which interests us here primarily, is exogamy, that is the prohibition of sexual intercourse within the clan. All members of the same large group designate themselves, as we know, by the same name, and this, especially in the simpler cultures, is not merely a label but an indication of nature. A common

name means, to a certain extent, an identity of personal substance, and kinship implies a bodily sameness.

The real importance of the clan in native imagination and society is illustrated by an interesting linguistic distinction. The native word for "friend" is *lubaygu*, signifying "the man with whom I associate from choice, because I like him." A European who is learning the language invariably makes mistakes in using this word. Wherever he sees two men closely associated, getting on well together, and obviously on friendly terms, he describes their relationship by the word *lubayla* (his friend), without first finding out whether they are kindred. But this word may only be applied to a man's friend from another clan, and it is not only incorrect, but even improper, to use it of a kinsman. Whenever I used the expression *lubaym* (thy friend) to denote a man's close companion from the same clan, I was rather sharply corrected. *Gala! Veyogu matauna, veyoda—kumila taytanidesi!* ("No! this man is my kinsman; we're kinsmen —the clan is the same!") Thus a twofold scheme in the relations between men is clearly defined linguistically by the two words for friend, one meaning "friend within the barrier," the other "friend across the barrier." This distinction shows how strong is the idea of clanship; it also corresponds to the classificatory use of kinship terms, and to the whole scheme of native relationship.

Needless to say, the same distinction is made when speaking or thinking of the relation between a man and a woman. The word *lubaygu*, meaning here "sweetheart or lover," can never be applied to a woman of the same

clan. In this context it is even more incompatible with the concept of *veyola* (kinship, that is the sameness of substance) than in the relation between two men. Women of the same clan can only be described as sisters (*ludaytasi*, our sisters; *luguta*, my sister; *lumuta*, thy sister; *luleta*, his sister). Women of other clans are described by the generic term *tabu-* (with affixed pronouns: *tubudayasi*, our cousins; *tabugu*, my cousin; *tabum*, thy cousin, etc.). The primary meaning of this word is "father's sister." It also embraces "father's sister's daughter" or "paternal cross-cousin," or, by extension, "all the women of the father's clan"; and, in its widest sense, "all the women not of the same clan."

In this, its most extensive application, the word stands for "lawful woman," "woman with whom intercourse is possible." For such a woman the term *lubaygu* ("my sweetheart") may be correctly used; but this term is absolutely incompatible with the kinship designation, *luguta*, my sister. This linguistic use embodies, therefore, the rule of exogamy, and to a large extent it expresses the ideas underlying this. Two people of the opposite sex and standing in the relation of brother and sister in the widest sense, that is belonging to the same clan, must neither marry nor cohabit, nor even show any sexual interest in one another. The native word for clan incest or breach of exogamy is, as we know already, *suvasova*.

As we know, the expressions *tosuvasova yoku* (thou incest committer), *kaysuvasova kwim* (thou incestuous penis), *kwaysuvasova wim* (thou incestuous cunnus) fall into the category of insults or accusations. They can,

however, be used either lightly and without offence, or seriously as statements of fact with even tragic consequences. This double use of the expression corresponds to a deep-lying moral distinction between degrees of exogamous breach: a distinction which is not easily grasped save after prolonged field-work, as it is overlaid by an official and indoctrinated theory which the natives invariably retail to the unwary ethnographer. Let me first state this native theory of *suvasova* (as obtained by the question-and-answer method) which gives only the first approach to the true attitude of the natives.

If you inquire from intelligent and *bona fide* informants into the various aspects of exogamy and clan organization point by point, and make a composite picture from their various statements, you will necessarily arrive at the conclusion that marriage and sex intercourse within the clan are neither allowed nor ever practised and that they do not even constitute a serious temptation to the natives. Marriage, anyone will tell you, is quite impossible between men and women of the same clan; nor does it ever happen. As to intercourse, this would be most improper and would be censured by an indignant public opinion. A couple guilty of such an act would, if discovered, incur the anger of the whole community; they would be deeply mortified and terribly ashamed. And to the question "What would they do on discovery?" the invariable answer is that they would commit suicide by jumping from a coco-nut palm. This well-known method of escaping from an unpleasant situation is called *lo'u*.

"What would happen if they were not discovered?"

To this the usual answer is that a breach of exogamy entails by itself an unpleasant though not necessarily fatal disease. A swelling of the belly heralds the oncoming of this retributive ailment. Soon the skin becomes white, and then breaks out into small sores which grow gradually bigger, while the man fades away in a wasting sickness. A little insect, somewhat like a small spider or a fly, is to be found in such a diseased organism. This insect is spontaneously generated by the actual breach of exogamy. As the natives put it: "We find maggots in a corpse. How do they come? *Ivagi wala*—it just makes them. In the same way the insect is made in the body of the *tosuvasova* (exogamy breaker). This insect wriggles round like a small snake; it goes round and round; it makes the eyes swollen, the face swollen, the belly swollen, as in *popoma* (dropsy, or any other pronounced bodily swelling), or in *kavatokulo* (wasting disease)." And examples are readily given of people who have had or are going through a similar disease.

Thus the native statements supply us with a consistent theory of incest and exogamy, which could be summarized so far by a conscientious ethnographer somewhat as follows: "Exogamy is an absolute taboo for the natives, both as regards marriage and as regards sexual intercourse; there is a strong moral disapproval of it which would provoke the anger of the community against delinquents and drive them, on discovery, to suicide. There is also a supernatural sanction against it, a dreadful disease culminating in death. Hence exogamy is strictly kept and breaches never occur."

To substantiate this statement an ethnographer would adduce linguistic testimony: there is only one word for the breach of exogamy, *suvasova*, whether this be incest with the nearest relative or merely intercourse with a woman of the same clan. The linguistic usage is, moreover, the typical expression of clan solidarity, of the so-called spontaneous obedience to law and custom. Clan solidarity is also expressed in the unity of names, in the unity of totemic animals, and in the many other forms of totemic identification. And, as an additional proof of its reality, there is the classificatory use of kinship terms.

And yet we have already had indications that neither the solidarity of clanship, nor the classificatory nature of kinship, nor the completeness of the exogamous taboo are absolutely maintained in real life. Not only does there exist a long scale of penalties and blame inflicted for the various degrees of exogamous breach, but marriages within the same clan are not unknown and even the most flagrant transgressions of the taboo allow of customary evasions and adjustments.

What I wish to make clear, by confronting the gist of native statements with the results of direct observation, is that there is a serious discrepancy between the two. The statements contain the ideal of tribal morality; observation shows us how far real behaviour conforms to it. The statements show us the polished surface of custom which is invariably presented to the inquisitive stranger; direct knowledge of native life reveals the underlying strata of human conduct, moulded, it is true, by the rigid surface of custom, but still more deeply influenced by the smoul-

dering fires of human nature. The smoothness and uniformity, which the mere verbal statements suggest as the only shape of human conduct, disappears with a better knowledge of cultural reality.

Since in this divergence between the hearsay method of collecting evidence and first-hand experience of savage life, we have a very important source of ethnographic error, it must be made clear that blame cannot be laid on native informants, but rather on the ethnographer's whole-hearted reliance on the question-and-answer method. In laying down the moral rule, in displaying its stringency and perfection, the native is not trying really to deceive the stranger. He simply does what any self-respecting and conventional member of a well-ordered society would do: he ignores the seamy and ugly sides of human life, he overlooks his own shortcomings and even those of his neighbours, he shuts his eyes to that which he does not want to see. No gentleman wants to acknowledge the existence of what is "not done," what is universally considered bad, and what is improper. The conventional mind ignores such things, above all when speaking to a stranger—since dirty linen should not be washed in public.

The Melanesian is as sensitive to indelicacy and as conventional in matters of decorum and propriety as any mid-Victorian middle-aged gentleman or spinster. Imagine an ethnographer from Mars inquiring of our respectable gentleman (or spinster) about matrimonial morals in England. He would be told that monogamy is the one and only form of marriage, that chastity is re-

quired of both parties before marriage and that adultery is strictly forbidden by law, morals, manners, and our code of honour. All this is, in a way, quite true: it embodies the authorized ideal of religion and morality. And if the Martian went on to inquire whether adultery occurs in practice, our gentleman (or spinster) would resent the question as an implied insult and would grow cold or hot over it. (For you must remember that he is no more accustomed to being used as an informant than is the Melanesian gentleman to whom you give a stick of tobacco for information received.)

If the Martian, versed in the modern method of field-work, as recommended by some schools of Anthropology, should proceed to the "concrete manner of questioning," he might really get into trouble. To the concrete inquiry: "How many times have you slept with your friend's wife, and how often has your wife slept with another man?"—the answer would not be verbal but behaviouristic. And the Martian, if in a position to do so, would enter in his note-book: "The natives of the terrestrial planet never commit adultery; there is a powerful group sentiment, if not group instinct, preventing them from this crime; even the hypothetical mention of a possible transgression of this sacred law puts them into a singular mental state, accompanied by emotional discharges, explosive expressions, and those violent actions which make the term 'savage' so appropriate to the rude natives of the Earth."

This statement would be obviously one-sided, and yet the terrestrial informant was in no way trying to deceive the inquirer. In the case of our own society we know the

answer to the riddle. The informant, though aware of possible breaches of marital fidelity, not only does not want to parade them before a stranger but is always ready to forget them himself under the influence of strong emotional attachment to an ideal. Now to a Melanesian the subject of possible incest with a near matrilineal relative is shocking in the highest degree; while breach of exogamy is one of those subjects which are to be discussed only in confidence and among friends. A gentleman in the Trobriand Islands is as ready as we are to deceive himself, when he feels that tribal honour requires it. He is offered a few sticks of tobacco, and told to speak about intimate and delicate matters. The anthropologist with his rapid and at times penetrating questions, with his insistence on fact and on concrete detail, arouses the same reactions as would the hypothetical inquirer from Mars among us. The native may feel hurt and refuse to discuss the matter, as happens time after time to a field-worker in the earlier stages of his ethnographic exploration. Or else he states such ideal conditions as are demanded by his sense of propriety, as do credit to himself and to his fellow-tribesmen, and as do not compromise anybody or any aspect of his communal life.

For besides the feeling of dignity and conventional subservience to tribal honour, there is another grave reason why the native does not want to introduce any haphazard European talker to the seamy side of his communal life. He is accustomed to find white men nosing about his sexual affairs, some in order to interfere with his women, others, and worse, to moralize and to improve

him; and, most dangerous of all, others to issue laws and regulations which introduce difficulties, at times insurmountable, into his tribal organization. Elementary caution, then, tells him not to go beyond the most obvious generalities and to state merely the bald outline of his moral rules and regulations, such as seem unassailable even by the most interfering missionary or government official.

The upshot of all this is that the hasty field-worker, who relies completely upon the question-and-answer method, obtains at best that lifeless body of laws, regulations, morals, and conventionalities which *ought* to be obeyed, but in reality are often only evaded. For in actual life rules are never entirely conformed to, and it remains, as the most difficult but indispensable part of the ethnographer's work, to ascertain the extent and mechanism of the deviations.

In order, however, to penetrate to the exception, to the deviation, to the breach of custom, it is necessary to become acquainted directly with the behaviour of the native; and this can be done only through a knowledge of the language and through a prolonged residence among the people. But most modern scientific field-work has been accomplished by the rapid and precise, sometimes overprecise, methods built upon the technique of question-and-answer, and it suffers from over-simplifying and over-standardizing the legal constitution of native culture.[1] Such material again has led unfortunately to the anthropological doctrine of the impeccability of native races, of

[1] This point has been elaborated as the main thesis in *Crime and Custom in Savage Society*, which should be read in connection with the above argument.

their immanent legality, and inherent and automatic subservience to custom.

Returning now to our special problem of incest and exogamy and applying to it the methodological principles just discussed, we can ask what more there is to learn about these taboos and in what way it is possible to learn it. The same informant who at first supplied the rounded-off official version of them, who even indignantly repudiated any indiscreet suggestions, begins to know you better or finds that you have become acquainted with the real facts in some concrete incident. Then you can confront him with the contradiction, and he himself will very often put you on the scent of the truth and give you a correct account of the exceptions and contraventions which recur with regard to the rule.

A very capable and useful informant of mine, Gomaya, who has appeared several times in these pages, was at first very touchy on the subject of incest and resented any suggestions as to its possibility. He was a valuable informant because of certain shortcomings in his character. Proud and sensitive on points of tribal honour, he was also very vain and inclined to boast. Moreover, he soon found that he could not conceal his own affairs from me as they were notorious through the district. His intrigue with Ilamweria, a girl of the same clan, was a subject for general gossip. So, combining necessity with the satisfaction of his *amour propre*, Gomaya explained to me that a breach of clan exogamy—he and his sweetheart belonged to different sub-clans of the Malasi—is rather a desirable and interesting form of erotic experience.

He told me also that he would have married the girl, such marriages being possible though viewed with disfavour, had she not become pregnant, and he succumbed to the disease which follows upon breach of exogamous taboo. He then went off to his native village of Sinaketa where he grew worse and worse, until he was helped by an old man, a friend of his father's, who knew a very powerful magic against such disease. The old man chanted spells over some herbs and some water, and after the application of this remedy, Gomaya got gradually better. The old man then taught him how to perform the magic; and ever after, Gomaya proudly added, he preferred to sleep with girls of the same clan, always using the prophylactic magic.

All his statements made it clear to me that breach of exogamy is rather an enviable achievement, because a man thus proves the strength of his love magic in that he is able to overcome, not merely the natural resistance of women but also their tribal morality. Thus even from one personal history it was possible to gather the main lines of practice and to understand certain complications and apparent contradictions of exogamous prohibitions. In further discussions with other natives, and above all by the collection of concrete material, I was able to supplement these earlier statements and to correct them. For Gomaya naturally exaggerated certain points in order to satisfy his vanity, and he thus put facts into a wrong perspective. He represented himself, for instance, as the one glorious exception to the rule; gave me to understand that few people only knew the magic of incest, and that

breach of exogamy was a singularly daring achievement. All of which was not true.

The fact is that the breach of exogamy within the clan, intrigue with what the natives call *kakaveyola* (kindred-in-clan or pseudo-kindred), though officially forbidden, ruled to be improper, and surrounded by supernatural sanctions, is yet everywhere committed. To use a somewhat loose comparison, it figures in the tribal life of the Trobrianders much in the same way as that in which adultery figures in French novels. There is no moral indignation or horror about it, but the transgression encroaches upon an important institution, and cannot be officially regarded as permissible.

Marriages—as distinct from intrigues—*within the clan* are definitely regarded as a serious breach of the rule. The one or two cases on record (see e.g. above, ch. xii, sec. 4) show that natives will not actively interfere with them, once they are contracted. But I found that it was not proper to mention the incestuousness of a marriage to any of the people concerned nor yet speak about it in the presence of their near relatives. Even general allusions to incest and exogamy have to be carefully avoided in the presence of such transgressors. As to the supernatural sanctions, the prophylactic magic already mentioned, performed over wild ginger root wrapped up in leaves, over water warmed by heated stones, and over dry banana leaf, is well-nigh universally known and is used very freely.

Thus the rule of exogamy, far from being uniform and wholesale in its application, works differently with regard to marriage and to sexual intercourse; is allowed

PLATE 90

MOTHER AND CHILD

[*Ch. XIII, 6*; *ch. VIII,* 1 *and* 4]

certain latitudes by public opinion and permits of evasions of the supernatural sanctions. All this had to be stated in detail to give a clear idea of the mechanism of exogamy.

There is also an interesting difference in stringency according to the clans in which it happens. Of the four totemic divisions, the Malasi have the reputation of being the most persistent exogamy breakers and committers of incest. All the incestuous marriages on record have happened within this clan; and I was told that this was not an accident but that only the Malasi and no other clan will tolerate such marriages. The myth of incest, which will be described in the next chapter, is associated with the Malasi, and so also is the magic of love and the magic to frustrate incest disease.

Far more stringently are the rules of exogamy obeyed when the two people concerned belong, not only to the same clan, but to the same sub-clan (*dala*). Such people are called real kinsmen (*veyola mokita*, or simply *veyola*) in contradistinction to *kakaveyola*. Between such people a much greater secrecy is observed when incest is committed; there is no jauntiness or covert boasting, and marriage is impossible.

A still higher degree of stringency obtains when we come to kinship traceable in actual genealogy. Incest with a mother's sister's daughter is a real crime, and it may lead to consequences as serious as suicide. A case of suicide described elsewhere illustrates the manner in which a man guilty of such incest might have to inflict punishment upon himself.[1] Incest with the own sister is, as we

[1] Cf. *Crime and Custom*, pp. 77 and 78, and below, ch. xiv, sec. 3.

know already, a dreadful crime to the natives. Yet even here it would not be correct to assume an absolutely smooth and secure working of tribal law, because cases of breach of the rule occur in reality as well as in folk-lore. But of this we shall have to speak presently.

Thus the uniformity of the rules and the simplicity of the sanctions by which they are enforced is shown to be a surface phenomenon, below which run the complex currents and undercurrents which form the true course of tribal life. On the surface we have one word, *suvasova*, one clan kinship, one punishment, one sense of right and wrong. In reality we have the distinction between marriage and mere intercourse, between clan and sub-clan (*kakaveyola* and *veyola*), between genealogical kinship and mere community of sub-clan, between the own sister and the classificatory sisters. We have also to distinguish between direct enforcement by public opinion and by supernatural sanctions, neither of which works in a simple or infallible manner. Any attempt to understand this complex state of affairs leads us to the fundamental factor in social organization, that is, kinship, and this again cannot be properly understood without a knowledge of family life, and the constitution of the family.

6

THE SUPREME TABOO

All the sociological divisions, local communities, clans, sub-clans, and classificatory kinship groups of the Trobrianders are rooted in the family. Only by studying the

formation of the earliest bonds between parent and child, by following the gradual growth and development of these, and their ever-widening extension into bonds of local grouping and clanship, can we grasp the kinship system of the natives.

The fundamental principles of mother-right had to be stated at the beginning of this book, since without a knowledge of it and of the relationship between father and child no description can be given of any native custom. We know therefore that, according to tribal law, kinship, the identity of blood and body, runs only in mother line. We also know that father and child are related, in the eyes of the native, merely by a system of obligations and reciprocal duties, but that this does not exclude a strong bond of an emotional nature between them. It will be necessary for us at this juncture to become acquainted with an outline of native kinship terminology, though full statement on the subject will have to be deferred to a future publication.[1]

TABLE OF RELATIONSHIP TERMS

A. *Kinship Terms*

1. Tabu(gu).—Grandparent, grandchild; father's sister, father's sister's daughter.
2. Ina(gu).—Mother, mother's sister; mother's clanswoman.
3. Tama(gu).—Father, father's brother; father's clansman; father's sister's son.
4. Kada(gu).—Mother's brother and, reciprocally, sister's son and sister's daughter.
5. Lu(gu)ta.—Sister (man speaking), brother (woman speaking); woman of same clan and generation (man speaking), man of same clan and generation (woman speaking).

[1] *Psychology of Kinship* announced to appear in the *International Library of Psychology.*

6. Tuwa(gu).—Elder brother (man speaking), elder sister (woman speaking); clansman of same generation but older (man speaking), clanswoman of same generation but older (woman speaking).
7. Bwada(gu).—Younger brother (man speaking), younger sister (woman speaking); clansman of same generation but younger (man speaking), clanswoman of same generation but younger (woman speaking).
8. Latu(gu).—Child, male or female.

B. *Marriage Relationships*

9. (Ulo)mwala.—Husband.
10. (Ulo)kwava.—Wife.

C. *Relationships-in-law*

11. Yawa(gu).—Father-in-law, mother-in-law.
12. Lubou(gu).—Wife's brother, sister's husband.
13. Iva(gu)ta.—Husband's sister, brother's wife.
14. Tuwa(gu).—Wife's elder sister, husband's elder brother.
15. Bwada(gu).—Wife's younger sister, husband's younger brother.

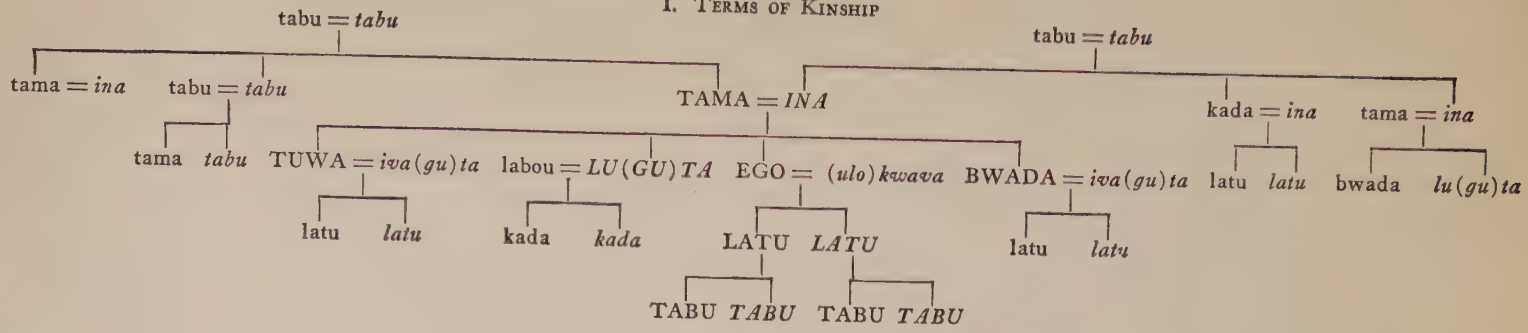
In the annexed genealogical diagram we find, printed in capital letters, the few words which furnish the key to the whole terminology of kinship and form the foundation both of the sociological system within the native culture and of its linguistic expression. These are the words used to designate the inmates of the household, the words which convey the dominant interests and emotions of childhood. They denote those relationships which are the starting point of all the social bonds of later life.

Take, to begin with, the word *inagu*, my mother, which is the first to be uttered by a child in the Trobriands as everywhere else.[1] The term correlated to it is *latugu*, by

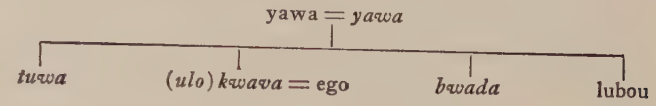
[1] In the genealogical Diagram the terms are given, without possessive pronouns; in the Table with the affixed particle of the first person (*gu*). This particle is usually suffixed to the end of the root (*inagu*, "my mother," *tamagu*, "my father," etc.), but it is infixed in two terms *lu-gu-ta* and *iva-gu-ta*. The second person is designated by the particle *m* or *mu; tamam*, "thy father," *lumuta*, "thy sister"; the third pers. sing. by the particle *la*, and so on. In actual speech the root is never used alone. The abstract meaning is conveyed by using the word with the

GENEALOGICAL DIAGRAM OF RELATIONSHIP

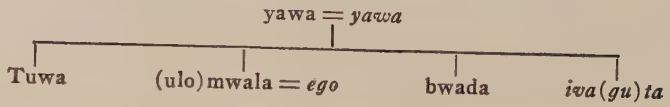
I. Terms of Kinship



II. Relationships-in-Law (Man Speaking)



III. Relationships-in-Law (Woman Speaking)



which the mother designates her own child. These are the two terms of the mother-to-child relationship on which the whole system of native kinship organization rests. (In our diagram, Ego is addressed by his mother, *latugu*, and, later, he in turn uses this word to his own offspring as indicated there.) Apart from the intense emotional interest taken by the mother in her child, and the response of the infant to the maternal organism—both these elements being physiological and universal in all human societies—the relation in the Trobriands is sociologically defined by a number of ritual observances, beginning with pregnancy and leading the woman into those various duties and taboos of early maternity which isolate mother and child into a small group of two, intimately bound up in each other (see ch. viii). The father, *tama*, not regarded as of the same bodily substance, stands, nevertheless, in a close emotional, legal, and economic relation to the child (see ch. vii). On the pls. 90 and 91 we see typical illustrations of maternal and paternal attitudes expressing tenderness and pride.

When the child grows up, it gains a gradual independence. But in certain respects this progress is slower and lasts longer in Melanesia than among ourselves. Weaning takes place at a later stage, and the child is surrounded by the tender cares of the mother and father, constantly carried and watched over, until it passes to freedom and independence almost at a single stride. We know already (see ch. iii) that children suffer very little interference

third person singular suffix. *Inala* means "mother" as well as "his mother." All male terms are in roman types; the female in italic. Terms for the nearest family relationship are printed in capitals.

from their parents in the matter of sexual freedom, and that in this respect the interests of the child are naturally directed away from home and find an easy outlet among his playmates of the same age.

The removal of a child out of his family is due to yet another factor, which becomes increasingly prominent and which will colour the future sexual life of the individual. This is the supreme taboo of the Trobriander; the prohibition of any erotic or even of any tender dealings between brother and sister. This taboo is the prototype of all that is ethically wrong and horrible to the native. It is the first moral rule seriously impressed in the individual's life, and the only one which is enforced to the full by all the machinery of social and moral sanctions. It is so deeply engrained in the structure of native tradition that every individual is kept permanently alive to it.

The relation between brother and sister is denoted by the term *luguta* (No. 5 of our table). This term means "sister" when uttered by a male, and "brother" when spoken by a female. In its wider meaning it designates a person of the opposite sex and of the forbidden class, that is, of the same sub-clan or clan as Ego. In its widest and metaphorical sense it is used for any tabooed person or thing. As a metaphor the word "sister" (*luguta*) is frequently used in magical formulæ when such things as a blight or a disease are to be exorcized.

The term *luguta* is used only with regard to the tabooed relationship, since children of the same parents and of the same sex use different kinship designations (*tuwagu*, *bwadagu*) to describe each other; *tuwagu* meaning "my

elder brother" (man speaking) and "my elder sister" (woman speaking); and *bwadagu* "my younger brother" (man speaking) and "my younger sister" (woman speaking).

Round the word *luguta* a new order of ideas and moral rules begins to grow up at an early stage of the individual's life history. The child, accustomed to little or no interference with most of its whims or wishes, receives a real shock when suddenly it is roughly handled, seriously reprimanded and punished whenever it makes any friendly, affectionate, or even playful advances to the other small being constantly about in the same household. Above all, the child experiences an emotional shock when it becomes aware of the expression of horror and anguish on the faces of its elders when they correct it. This emotional contagion, this perception of moral reactions in the social environment is perhaps the most powerful factor in a native community by which norms and values are imposed on an individual's character.

The circumstantial arrangements and set customs which preclude any possibility of intimate contact between brother and sister are also, of course, very important. Brother and sister are definitely forbidden to take part at the same time in any childish sexual games, or even in any form of play. And this is not only a rule laid down by elders, but it is also a convention rigorously observed by the children themselves.

We know already (see ch. iii) that when a boy grows up and when there is a sister of his living in the parental house, he has to sleep in the bachelors' hut (*bukumatula*).

In her love affairs, the girl must most rigorously avoid any possibility of being seen by the brother. When, on certain occasions, brother and sister have to appear in the same company—when they travel in the same canoe, for instance, or participate in a domestic meeting—a rigidity of behaviour and a sobriety in conversation falls upon all those present. No cheerful company, no festive entertainment, therefore, is allowed to include brother and sister, since their simultaneous presence would throw a blight on pleasure and would chill gaiety.

Although, in a matrilineal society, the brother is the guardian of his sister, although she has to bend down when he approaches, to obey his commands and to regard him as the head of the family, he never has any concern in his sister's love affairs, nor in her prospective marriage. After she is married, however, he becomes the head of her family in more than a metaphorical sense. He is called by his sister's children *kadagu* (my maternal uncle), and as such exercises great influence, especially over the boys.[1]

The careful avoidance by a man of any knowledge about his sister's amorous prospects is, I am certain, not only an ideal but also a fact. I was over and over again assured that no man has the slightest inkling as to whom his sister is going to marry, although this is the common knowledge of everyone else. And I know that nothing remotely touching upon the subject would be uttered

[1] Compare the analysis of this relation in *Sex and Repression*, pt. ii, chs. vi and ix; *Crime and Custom*, pt. ii, ch. iii; and in this book, ch. i, sec. I.

within earshot of him. I was told that if a man came by chance upon his sister and her sweetheart while they were making love, all three would have to commit *lo'u* (suicide by jumping from a coco-nut palm). This is obviously an exaggeration which expresses the ideal and not the reality: if such a mishap occurred the brother would most likely pretend to himself, and to them, that he had seen nothing, and would discreetly disappear. But I know that considerable care is taken to preclude any such possibility, and no one would dream of mentioning the subject in the presence of the brother.

Brother and sister thus grow up in a strange sort of domestic proximity: in close contact, and yet without any personal or intimate communication; near to each other in space, near by rules of kinship and common interest; and yet, as regards personality, always hidden and mysterious. They must not even look at each other, they must never exchange any light remarks, never share their feelings and ideas. And as age advances and the other sex becomes more and more associated with love-making, the brother and sister taboo becomes increasingly stringent. Thus, to repeat, the sister remains for her brother the centre of all that is sexually forbidden—its very symbol; the prototype of all unlawful sexual tendencies within the same generation and the foundation of prohibited degrees of kinship and relationship, though the taboo loses force as its application is extended.

The nearest female of the previous generation, the mother, is also surrounded by a taboo, which is coloured, however, by a somewhat different emotional reaction.

Incest with her is regarded with real horror, but both the mechanism by which this taboo is brought home and the way in which it is regarded are essentially distinct from the brother-sister taboo. The mother stands in a close bodily relation to her child in its earliest years, and from this position she recedes, though only gradually, as he grows up. As we know, weaning takes place late, and children, both male and female, are allowed to cuddle in their mother's arms and to embrace her whenever they like.

When a small boy begins his playful sexual approaches to small girls, this does not in any way disturb his relationship to the mother, nor has he to keep any special secrecy on the subject. He does not, by preference, discuss these matters with his parents, but there is no taboo against his doing so. When he is older and carries on more serious intrigues, he might, in certain circumstances, even be allowed to sleep with his sweetheart in his parents' house. Thus the relation to the mother and the sexual relation are kept distinct and allowed to run side by side. The ideas and feelings centering round sex on the one hand, and maternal tenderness on the other, are differentiated naturally and easily, without being separated by a rigid taboo.

Again, since normal erotic impulses find an easy outlet, tenderness towards the mother and bodily attachment to her are naturally drained of their stronger sensuous elements. Incestuous inclinations towards the mother are regarded as highly reprehensible, as unnatural and immoral, but there is not the same feeling of horror and fear

as towards brother-and-sister incest. When speaking with the natives of maternal incest, the inquirer finds neither the rigid suspense nor the emotional reactions which are always evoked by any allusion to brother and sister relations. They would discuss the possibility without being shocked, but it was clear that they regarded incest with the mother as almost impossible. I would not affirm that such incest has never occurred, but certainly I have obtained no concrete data, and the very fact that no case survives in memory or in tradition shows that the natives take relatively little interest in it.[1]

The maternal grandmother and her grandson are also sexually forbidden to each other, but there is no horror about this relationship, such incest appearing as a merely ridiculous possibility. As we know, sexual intercourse with an old woman is regarded as something indecorous, ludicrous, and unæsthetic; and this is the light in which any suggestion of grandson-grandmother incest is looked upon. But such a lapse from good morals and manners does not loom largely in fantasies, folk-lore or tribal morals. These two call each other by the reciprocal term *tabugu*, which also has the wider meaning of "grandparent," "grandchild," and wider yet, "ancestor," "descendant."

So far we have discussed individual kinship in the female line and within the household: between mother and child, brother and sister, and, going beyond the house-

[1] For a comparison of the two attitudes towards incest with the mother and the sister, respectively, and for the correlation of this phenomenon with the matrilineal system of kinship and with the natives' treatment of infantile sexuality, see the writer's *Sex and Repression*.

hold, the relation with the grandmother. I have intentionally and carefully distinguished this from so-called classificatory kinship ties; for the mixing up of the individual and the "classificatory" relation, kept apart by the natives in law, custom, and idea, has been a most misleading and dangerous cause of error in anthropology, vitiating both observation and theory on social organization and kinship. Looking back to our diagram, and carrying the genealogy beyond the family circle, we can see that certain terms from within the circle are repeated outside it. In the life history of the individual most people who come into contact with the growing child are, in one way or another, partially assimilated or compared to the child's primary relatives within the household, and the terms used for parents, brothers, and sisters are gradually extended. The first person from the larger world to enter into the circle of kinsmen is the mother's sister, who, although she is called by the same term as the own mother, *inagu*, is very definitely distinguished from her. The word *inagu* extended to the mother's sister is, from the outset, given an entirely different meaning—something like "second mother" or "subsidiary mother." When the mother's sister is a member of the same village community, she is a very frequent visitor within the household; she replaces the mother in certain functions or at certain times, she tends the child, and shows it a considerable amount of devotion. The child is taught by its elders to extend the term *inagu* to her, and this extension is made natural and plausible to the child by the consid-

erable similarity between its relations to mother and mother's sister.

But there can be no doubt that the new use of the word remains always what it is, an extension and a metaphor. In its second sense *inagu* is used with a different feeling-tone; and there are circumlocutions, grammatical usages, and lexicographical indices which differentiate the secondary from the primary meaning. Only to a linguistically untrained European observer, especially if he is not conversant with the native language, can the word *inagu* (2) (mother's sister) appear identical with *inagu* (1) (own mother). On this point any intelligent native, if properly questioned, could correct the ethnographer's error.

The same gradual extension, and corresponding change in emotional content, takes place with regard to other terms, and the word *luguta,* used to the mother's sister's daughter, conveys to the boy only an attenuated and diluted idea of sisterhood. The own sister remains a prototype of the new relation, and the taboo observed towards the own sister has also to be kept with regard to the secondary sister; but the distinction between the two taboos and the two relations is well marked. The real sister lives in the same house; for her the boy, as her future guardian, feels a direct responsibility; she remains the object on which the first and only serious prohibition has been brought home to him. The secondary sister lives in another house or even village; there are no duties or responsibilities towards her and the prohibition with regard to her is a weakened extension of the primary taboo. Thus

the own sister and the first maternal cousin appear in an entirely different light, not only as regards the degree, but as regards the fundamental quality of the relation. Incest with the first maternal cousin is regarded as wrong, but not horrible; as daring and dangerous, but not abominable. The early feeling for this distinction becomes, later on, crystallized in the doctrine of tribal law. The man knows and recognizes that *luguta* (1) is a person to whom he owes a great many duties, whom he has partly to support after her marriage, and with regard to whom he has to observe the supreme taboo. *Luguta* (2) has no specific claims on him, he is not her real guardian nor head of her household after marriage, and the sexual taboo does not operate with anything like the same stringency.

When we pass from the "secondary" relations, denoted by the terms *inagu* (2) and *luguta* (2) to more distant relatives, the intimacy of the bond and the stringency of the taboo falls off rapidly. To take the relation of *luguta* as an example: if a boy and girl can be traced to a common great-grandmother in the mother line, they are *luguta.* But the taboo would be much weaker. Beyond this it would be difficult even to index the term, as the relationship ceases to be traceable by pedigree. It would be just that of real kinship within the same sub-clan: *luguta, veyogu mokita—dalemasi taytanidesi* ("sister mine, kinswoman mine truly—sub-clan our identical)."

When we go beyond the sub-clan to the clan (*kumila*), the relation becomes less intimate once more and the taboo less stringent: *luguta wala, kakaveyogu—kama kumila taytanidesi* ("just my sister, my pseudo-kinswoman—

mine and her clan identical)." This defines the word *luguta* in its fully extended, that is truly classificatory sense. It means, as we know already, one of those women with whom sex intercourse is legally forbidden, but with whom it may be indulged. The widest meaning of the word *luguta* is thus profoundly different from *luguta* (1), the carrier of the supreme taboo.

Thus, starting from the individual relationships within the household and following the kinship extensions in the life history of the individual, we have arrived at the same results as in our discussion of clanship and the general prohibitions of exogamy and incest. The word *luguta* is one term of a dichotomy separating women into "forbidden" and "lawful."

The other term *tabugu* ("lawful woman") also originates within the family and is extended thence. To follow this process we must turn to the other side of the pedigree and examine the paternal relations.

The most important person on the father's side is obviously the father himself. Here we meet the second fundamental fact in household morality: though the father is not a kinsman of his children, sexual intercourse between father and daughter, though it occurs, is not only illegal and improper, but is viewed with definite moral repugnance. Marriage between father and daughter is not allowed nor even imaginable to the native.

Perhaps the most important case on record of the violation of this taboo is that of Kumatala, of the sub-clan next in rank to the Tabalu (the Mwauri of the Lubuka

clan), who is headman of the village of Liluta. He is known to live with his beautiful eldest daughter Bodogupo'u. Another recorded case is that of the famous sorcerer Piribomatu, also of very high rank, who "comes to" or "approaches," as the natives put it, his daughter Bokaylola. It is consistent with native theory that, morally, the natives do not distinguish between a man's real daughter and his stepdaughter, and have no special term for the latter relationship. For since his relation to the child is determined through the mother and since incest is prohibited because of her, it is equally wrong to have intercourse with any of her offspring, whether of the present or of a previous marriage.

Thus Budiya, headman of Kabululo, married a widow who had a daughter named Bodulela:

Matauna imwoyki Bodulela, sene gaga bayse,
This man comes to Bodulela, very bad this,
boge latula minana. Isuvi wabwala,
already child his this female. He enters in house,
minana boge iliku dabela
this (female) already undoes skirt her;
ikanupwagega, igise matauna
she reclines with legs apart, he sees this (male)
wila— ikaya.
cunnus— he copulates.

This means: The man happened to enter the hut when his stepdaughter had taken off her fibre petticoat for the night and was lying, perhaps already half asleep, in a

tempting position. Stirred by this, Budiya succumbed and committed the reprehensible act.

In this version, the cause of incest is ascribed to an untoward accident, but other accounts maintain that Budiya had long desired his stepdaughter, that she refused him, and that he seduced her by love magic. Love magic also is said to have been used by Gumabudi, headman of Yalumugwa, who used to cohabit regularly with his real daughter. The latter, Bulubwaloga, we have already met, for she was the wife of Gilayviyaka, one of the sons of the paramount chief, and she left her husband after he had committed adultery with one of his father's wives.

As we have said, the reasons given for the moral reprehensibility of intercourse between father and daughter are all connected with his marriage to the mother and his position in the household. *Sene gaga pela boge iva'i inala, boge iyousi vilakuria*—"very bad, because already he married her mother. Already he caught hold of the first marriage present" (see ch. iv, sec. 3). Again, a man should not sleep with his daughter, since it was his duty to be tender to her when she was a child, to take her in his arms. *Gala tamasisi deli latuda, pela tamala iyobwayli, ikopo'i*—"We do not sleep with children ours (daughters), because her father (the father) fondles, takes into his arms." Or the natives point out that, as the father has control of his daughter's marriage and love affairs, he must not sleep with her.

The cases of father-and-daughter incest just mentioned were universally known, but they were spoken of with great discretion and never before the people concerned.

Should a man guilty of such a crime be publicly told about it, he would have to commit suicide by jumping from a tree, say the natives.

It must be clearly understood that, although father-to-daughter incest is regarded as bad, it is not described by the word *suvasova* (clan exogamy or incest), nor does any disease follow upon it; and, as we know, the whole ideology underlying this taboo is different from that of *suvasova*.

The anomalous extension of the word for father (*tama*) to the father's sister's son is important, for it demonstrates the influence which language has upon customs and ideas. Marriage and intercourse with the male paternal first cousin is not strictly forbidden, but it is regarded somewhat askance. It is perhaps least censured among the Malasi of Kiriwina; and natives from other districts, who lose no opportunity of slandering their neighbours when a difference in custom allows of it, speak derisively of the people of Kiriwina "who marry their fathers and sleep with them." An ethnographer, ignorant of language and superficially acquainted with native customs and ideas, might speak about the natives' "horror of marriage and intercourse with a father in the classificatory sense"; and thus imply that they do not distinguish between *father* as "mother's husband" and *father* as "father's sister's son." Such a statement would be quite incorrect.

A man is not allowed to have intercourse with his daughter because she is his wife's nearest kinswoman; therefore we might expect to find that the wife's other near female kindred are also tabooed. This is actually

the case. A strong taboo is placed on a wife's sisters, whom, strangely enough, the man calls by the same two names (according to age) which he applies to his elder and younger brothers and which a woman uses to her elder and younger sisters: *tuwagu* and *bwadagu*. Thus here a man uses towards persons of the opposite sex names which indicate identity of sex. Analogously a woman addresses these same two terms to her husband's elder and younger brothers, with whom sexual intercourse is forbidden. There are a few recorded cases of this rule's transgression, the most notorious being that of Manimuwa and Dakiya already quoted (ch. vi, sec. 1). Here, again, although the word *suvasova* is not applied to the taboo, the natives feel strongly against intercourse with a wife's sister, who, after marriage, becomes to him somewhat like his own sister. A man must also abstain from intercourse with his wife's mother, but otherwise no taboo of avoidance exists.

By careful inquiry of several informants and by direct observation, I have compiled the following table of sex taboos in order of stringency. It is meant rather to facilitate a survey of the whole subject than to establish any rigid gradations.

1. By far the most stringent is the prohibition on brother-sister incest; it is the core of the *suvasova* taboo, and is of very rare occurrence either in reality or legend.

2. Incest with the mother is regarded as unnatural and unthinkable; there are no cases on record; it is an important form of *suvasova;* it is not spoken of with the same abhorrence as brother-sister incest.

3. Sexual intercourse with the own daughter is not called *suvasova;* it is not sanctioned by supernatural penalties; it is felt to be extremely bad; there are several cases on record.

4. Intercourse with the mother's sister's daughter is a form of *suvasova;* it is of rare occurrence; it is regarded as very bad and always kept secret; on discovery it is severely penalized.

5. Intercourse with the wife's sister is not a form of *suvasova,* but it is considered bad; marriage, whether in the form of polygamy or with a deceased wife's sister, is strongly disapproved of, but it does occur, while intrigues are not infrequent.

6. Intercourse with the mother-in-law or with the brother's wife is not proper, though it is not *suvasova,* and it probably occurs but infrequently.

7. Intercourse with the "classificatory" *luguta* (my sister) is *suvasova:* it is prohibited by legal doctrine and sanctioned by supernatural penalties; it is, however, frequently practised, and is, so to speak, at a premium.

An interesting commentary upon such gradations is contained in the following statement: *latugu tatougu—sene agu mwasila; tuwagu, bwadagu—ulo kwava tuwala, bwadala—agu mwasila. Tabuda, kadada, latuda o payomili gala tamwasila;* which may be freely translated: "My child truly mine—very much my shame; 'elder brother,' 'younger brother' (as I call them)—that is my wife's elder sister, her younger sister—my shame. Grandchildren, maternal nieces, children—all these in the classificatory sense, we are not ashamed of." Here we have

certain gradations recognized and expressed by the natives, and it is characteristic that, in such a volunteered statement, my informant would not mention the classificatory sister. That would not have been quite proper. Another commentary is contained in the fact that, whereas a man would swear at his mother, *kwoy inam* "have intercourse with thy mother" (*sic*), or might invite her to have intercourse with her father (*kwoy tamam*), he would never swear at his sister, and he would never swear at his daughter. Yet, as I have no doubt that incest between mother and son is far rarer than that between father and daughter, I have put it in the second and not in the third place.

One important relationship still remains, that called *tabugu*, father's sister, or father's sister's daughter, which has already been mentioned as the opposite category correlated with that of *luguta*, sister (man speaking). The father's sister is the prototype of the lawful, and even sexually recommended woman; that is, in the theory of native tradition, for, in reality, it is her daughter that really plays this part.

To the father's sister exactly the opposite attitude with regard to sexual behaviour is sanctioned and approved, to that which must be adopted towards the sister. Sexual intercourse with the father's own sister is emphatically right and proper. "It is very well when the boy copulates with his father's sister." The natives are never tired of repeating this moral maxim, and they use, in this context, the coarse term *kayta*, instead of the polite circumlocution *masisi deli* (sleep together), or *mwoyki* (come to,

FATHER AND CHILD

[*Ch. XIII, 6*]

visit). Her presence always carries with it the suggestion of licence, of indecent jokes and improper stories. In bawdy ditties, the refrain: *deli sidayase, deli tabumayase* (with our companions, with our paternal aunts) is of frequent occurrence. The paternal aunt and the sister must never be in the same company, since the first relaxes the bonds of propriety and the second constrains them.

Sexual intercourse, however, between a man and his paternal aunt, is important theoretically, symbolically and verbally rather than in actual life. She represents to him the class of lawful women and sexual freedom in general. She might be used to advise or even to procure for him; with herself, however, sexual intercourse is not frequently practised. She belongs to a previous generation, and, as a rule, what remains of her sexual endowment is not attractive. But whenever she and her nephews desire it, they are allowed to sleep together, preserving only a certain decorum when she is married. Marriage with the paternal aunt, though permissible and even desirable, seems never to occur: it was impossible for me to find a single instance of it among living people or in historical tradition.

The real practical substitute for his paternal aunt, the boy finds in her daughter. The two are regarded by tradition as specially suited for intercourse and for marriage. They are often engaged to each other by infant betrothal (see ch. iv, sec. 4). The natives will say that the paternal cross-cousin should be the first person, if age allows, with whom a boy should copulate.

The term, however, soon becomes extended to other

girls belonging to the same sub-clan and clan. Finally by an extension which goes beyond the usual limits of classificatory terminology, it becomes synonymous with "all women not of the same clan as the sister." It should be realized that the ordinary extensions of classificatory terminology go only to the limits of the clan. The widest sense in which the word for mother is used embraces all the women of the mother's clan. But the word *tabugu*, in its meaning of "lawful woman," extends over three clans, and embraces roughly three-quarters of female humanity, in contrast to the one-quarter which is forbidden. But this subject—the intricacies of the kinship system and of the kinship nomenclature—leads us beyond the limits of the present inquiry, and will have to be deferred to the future publication already mentioned.

The keynote to sexual morality and sexual freedom lies, as we have found, in the opposition between the two classes designated by *luguta* and *tabugu* ("sister" and "paternal cross-cousin") respectively. The taboo against incest between brother and sister is the most important and most dramatic feature of the Trobriand social organization; the more so because of a singular rift in traditional doctrine, a dogmatic inconsistency, which makes love and the magic of love derive from brother and sister incest. To the account of this important myth we shall now proceed in the last chapter.

CHAPTER XIV

A SAVAGE MYTH OF INCEST

The so-called savage has always been a plaything to civilized man—in practice a convenient instrument of exploitation, in theory a provider of sensational thrills. Savagery has been, for the reading public of the last three centuries, a reservoir of unexpected possibilities in human nature; and the savage has had to adorn this or that *a priori* hypothesis by becoming cruel or noble, licentious or chaste, cannibalistic or humane according to what suited the observer or the theory.

As a matter of fact, the savage with whom we became acquainted in Melanesia does not conform to any picture in black and white, in deep shadow or vivid light. His life is socially hedged round on all sides, his morality more or less on a level with that of the average European —that is if the customs of the latter were as frankly described as those of the Trobriander. The institutions which allow of some prenuptial intercourse and even favour it, show little to suggest any previous conditions of unbridled promiscuity or of an institution such as "group-marriage," so difficult to conceive in terms of any known social facts.

Such forms of licence as we find in the Trobriands fit so well into the scheme of individual marriage, the family, the clan, and the local group—and they fulfil certain

functions so adequately that there remains nothing serious or incomprehensible to explain away by reference to some hypothetical earlier stage. They exist to-day because they work well side by side with marriage and family; nay, for the benefit of marriage and family; and there is no need to assume any other causes for their past than those which maintain them at present. They existed probably always for the same reason—in a slightly different form, no doubt, but built on the same fundamental pattern. This, at least, is my theoretical attitude towards these facts.

It is as important to bear in mind, however, that the limitations, taboos, and moral rules are by no means absolutely rigid, slavishly obeyed or automatic in their action. As we have seen again and again the rules of sex are followed only in an approximate manner, leaving a generous margin for infringements; and the forces which make for law and order show a great deal of elasticity. Thus the savage, measured by standards of æsthetics, morality, and manners, displays the same human frailties, imperfections, and strivings as a member of any civilized community. He does not lend himself either to the straightforward descriptive shocker, or to use as a clue for a detective story on the sexual past of the promiscuous pithecanthropus. In fact, as I see him, he will in no way lend himself to quench our thirst for reconstructive sexual sensationalism.

Nevertheless, the story of Trobriand sexual life does not lack altogether certain dramatic elements; certain contrasts and contradictions which might almost excite hopes of finding something really "inexplicable," something

which might justify plunging into frank hypotheses, into phantastic visions of past evolution or cultural history. Perhaps the most dramatic element in the tradition of the natives is the myth about brother-and-sister incest, associated with the power of the magic of love.

As we know, among all rules and taboos there is one which has a really strong hold over native imagination and moral sense; and yet this unmentionable crime is the subject of one of their sacred stories and the basis of love magic, and thus is directed, so to speak, into the full current of tribal life. Here, at first sight, is an almost incredible inconsistency in belief and in moral tradition, one which might allow us to brand the natives as deprived of moral sense, or prove them to be in the "prelogical stage of mental development"; or else might be used to demonstrate the survival of marriage between brother and sister, or the co-existence of two cultural strata, one in which brother-and-sister unions are approved and the other in which they are tabooed. Unfortunately, the better we learn to understand the facts about the myth of incest and its cultural context, the less sensational, incredible, and immoral appear this and similar contradictions in custom and tradition; the less do they clamour for explanation in hypotheses about the "savage soul," pithecanthropi or "Kulturkreise"; and we find ourselves able instead to account for them in terms of contemporary and observable fact. But I have indulged long enough in reflections of a theoretical, not to say philosophic and moral nature; and now I must return to my humbler and soberer task of faithful and dispassionate chronicler.

A SAVAGE MYTH OF INCEST

I

THE SOURCES OF LOVE MAGIC

Love, the power of attraction, the mysterious charm that comes forth from a woman to a man or from a man to a woman and produces the obsession of a single desire, is, as we know, attributed by the natives to one main source: the magic of love.

In the Trobriands, most important systems of magic are founded on myth. The origin of man's power over rain and wind; of his ability to control the fertility of the soil and the movements of fish; of the sorcerer's destructive or healing powers—all these are traced back to certain primeval occurrences which, to the natives, account for man's capacity to wield magic. Myth does not furnish an explanation in terms of logical or empirical causality. It moves in a special order of reality peculiar to dogmatic thought, and it contains rather a warrant of magical efficiency, a charter of its secret and traditional nature than an intellectual answer to the scientific *why*. The facts narrated in myth and the ideas which underlie it, colour and influence native belief and behaviour. The events of a remote past are re-lived in actual experience.[1] This is especially important in the myth we are discussing, since its basic idea is that magic is so powerful that it can even break down the barrier of the strongest moral taboo. This influence of the past over the present is so strong

[1] A fuller analysis of this functional view of myth will be found in the writer's *Myth in Primitive Psychology*, in *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*, ch. xii; and in *Sex and Repression*, pt. ii.

that the myth generates its own replicas and is often used to excuse and explain certain otherwise inexcusable breaches of tribal law.

We have already spoken about the several systems of love magic, and pointed out that the two most important ones are associated with two local centres, Iwa and Kumilabwaga, which are united by a myth of the origin of their magic.

This is the story of the myth as I obtained it from informants of Kumilabwaga, the locality where the tragic events took place.[1]

I shall first give the narrative in a free but faithful translation, and then give the commentary as received from my informant. The numbers will allow the reader to compare this rendering with the native text, and with the word for word translation, which together form the substance of the next section.

The Myth

(1) The source (of love and magic) is Kumilabwaga. (2) A woman there brought forth two children, a girl and a boy. (3) The mother came (and settled down) to cut her fibre skirt; the boy cooked magical herbs (for the magic of love). (4) He cooked aromatic leaves in coconut oil. (5) He hung the vessel with the fluid (on a batten of the roof near the door) and went away to bathe. (6) The sister arrived from her firewood breaking expe-

[1] In another place, *Sex and Repression,* I have published a condensed and somewhat simplified version of the myth which, as I find, suffered slightly in the process. The version here given, with its full native text and two English translations, must be regarded as the full and correct statement.

dition; she put down the firewood; she asked the mother: "Fetch me some water, which my brother has put in the house." (7) The mother answered: "You go and fetch it yourself, my legs are burdened with the board on which I cut the skirt."

(8) The girl entered the hut, she saw the water-bottles lying there; with her head she brushed against the vessel with the magic fluid; the coco-nut oil dripped; it trickled into her hair; she passed her hands over it, wiped it off, and smelt it. (9) Then the power of magic struck her, it entered her inside, it turned her mind. (10) She went and fetched the water, she brought it back and put it down. (11) She asked her mother: "And what about my brother? (Where has the man gone?)"—The mother gave voice: "O my children, they have become mad! He has gone to the open seashore."

(12) The girl ran out, she sped towards the eastern shore, to the open sea. (13) She came to where the road abuts on the sea beach. There she untied her fibre skirt and flung it down. (14) She ran along the beach naked; she ran to the Bokaraywata beach (the place where the Kumilabwaga people usually bathe, and where they beach their canoes). (15) She came upon her brother there—he bathed in the Kadi'usawasa passage in the fringing reef. (16) She saw him bathing, she entered the water and went towards him, she gave him chase. (17) She chased him towards the rock of Kadilawolu. There he turned and ran back. (18) She chased him back and he went to the Olakawo rock. There he turned round and came back running. (19) He came back and went again to the Kadi'usawasa passage (i.e. where he was bathing first). There she caught him, there they lay down in the shallow water.

(20) They lay there (and copulated), then they went

ashore and they copulated again. They climbed the slope, they went to the grotto of Bokaraywata, there they lay down again and copulated. (21) They remained there together and slept. (22) They did not eat, they did not drink—this is the reason why they died (because of shame, because of remorse).

(23) That night a man of Iwa had a dream. He dreamt the dream of their *sulumwoya* (the mint plant which they used in their love magic). (24) "O my dream! Two people, brother and sister are together; I see in my mind; they lie by each other in the grotto of Bokaraywata." (25) He paddled over the sea arm of Galeya; he paddled to Kitava, and moored his canoe—he searched all over—but nothing was to be found. (26) He paddled over the sea arm of Da'uya, he came to Kumilabwaga, he paddled towards the shore, he landed. He saw a bird, a frigate-bird with its companions—they soared.

(27) He went and climbed the slope; he went and saw them dead. (28) And lo! a mint flower had sprouted through their breasts. He sat by their prostrate bodies, then he went along the shore. (29) He looked for the road, he searched and found it, he went to the village. (30) He entered the village—there was the mother sitting and cutting her fibre skirt. He spoke: "Do you know what has happened by the sea?" "My children went there and copulated and shame overcame them." (31) He spoke and said: "Come, recite the magic, so that I may hear it." (32) She recited, she went on reciting, he listened, he heard till he had learnt it completely. He learnt it right through to the end. (33) He came again, and asked: "What is the magical song of the coco-nut oil?" (34) He inquired, that man from Iwa. "Come now, tell me the song of the coco-nut oil."

(35) She recited it to the end. Then he said: "Remain here, I shall go. Part of the magic, the opening part, let it remain here. The eye of the magic, the finishing part, I shall take, and let it be called Kayro'iwa." (36) He went off, he came to the grotto, to the *sulumwoya* plant which sprouted and grew out of their breasts. (37) He broke off a sprig of the herb, he put it into his canoe, he sailed, he brought it to Kitava. (38) He went ashore in Kitava and rested there. He then sailed and landed in Iwa.

(39) These are his words (which he spoke in Iwa): "I have brought here the point of the magic, its eye (the sharpest, that is, the most efficient part of the magic). Let us call it the Kayro'iwa. The foundation, or the lower part (the less important part) the Kaylakawa remains in Kumilabwaga." (Henceforth the words of the speaker refer not to Iwa, but to Kumilabwaga. This is obviously an inconsistency, because in the myth he is speaking in Iwa. This probably was due to the faulty recital of the myth.) (40) The water of this magic is Bokaraywata; its sea passage Kadi'usawasa. There (on the beach) stands its *silasila* bush, there stands its *givagavela* bush. (41) If people from the lagoon villages would come to bathe (in the waterhole or in the sea passage), then the bushes would bleed. (42) This water is taboo to them—the youth of our village only should come and bathe in it. (43) But a fish caught in these waters is taboo to them (the young people of our village). When such a fish is caught in the nets, they should cut off its tail, then the old people might eat it. (44) Of a bunch of coco-nuts washed on the beach, they (the young people) must not eat a single one—it is a taboo. Only old men and old women may eat them.

(45) When they come and bathe in the Bokaraywata and then return to the beach, they make a hole in the sand

and say some magic. (46) Later on in their sleep they dream of the fish. They dream that the fish spring (out of the sea) and come into that pool. (47) Nose to nose the fish swim. If there is only one fish they would throw it out into the sea. (48) When there are two, one female, one male, the youth would wash in this water. Going to the village, he would get hold of a woman and sleep with her. (49) He would go on sleeping with her and make arrangements with her family so that they might marry. This is the happy end, they would live together and make their gardens.

(50) If an outsider would come here for the sake of the magic, he would bring a magical payment in the form of a valuable. (51) He would bring it and give it to you, you might give him the charm: (52) the spells of the *isika'i* leaves, of the betel pod, of the washing charm, of the smoking charm, of the stroking charm; you might give him also the charm of the obsidian blade, of the coco-nut, of the *silasila*, of the *buresi* leaves, of the coco-nut husk fibre, of the *gimgwam* leaves, of the *yototu* leaves, of the comb—and for all this, they ought to pay the substantial payment of *laga*.

(53) For this is the erotic payment of your magic. Then let them return home, and eat pigs, yams, ripe betel-nut, yellow betel-nut, red bananas, sugar cane. (54) For they have brought you valuables, food, betel-nut as a present. (55) For you are the masters of this magic, and you may distribute it. You remain here, they may carry it away; and you, the owners, remain here, for you are the foundation of this magic.

* * * * * * *

This myth really accounts, not for the origin of love magic, but for its transfer from Kitava to Iwa. Its most important cultural function, however, is that, being be-

lieved, it establishes a valid precedent for the efficiency of love magic; it proves that the spells and rites of Iwa and of Kumilabwaga are so powerful that they can even break down the terrible barriers which separate brother and sister and persuade them to commit incest.

Let us now retrace the narrative and insert a few comments upon certain obscure points. The additions to the text obtained from the narrator are indicated by numbers referring to the subsequent native text.

With reference to the relative age of the two children, my informant said: (56) "The man was the eldest child, and the woman followed." The family belonged to the Malasi clan, which, as we know already, is reputed to have a special propensity for breaking exogamous and incestuous prohibitions. To quote my native commentator: (57) "See, the Malasi marry their kinsfolk. There was one man in Wawela, a man by the name of Bigayuwo, who married Nabwayera (a kinswoman of his); one man in Vakuta; one man in Kitava, by name of Pwaygasi, who married Bosilasila." These names, which I have heard only from this informant, might be added to the other case previously recorded (ch. xii, sec. 4), in which a Malasi man married a Malasi woman.

To return to the myth, it is clear that the natives take it for granted that the Malasi of Kumilabwaga knew the magic already. As a matter of fact, most magic is imagined to have existed from the beginning of time, and to have been brought by each sub-clan from underground. The story of the accidental smelling of the charmed oil

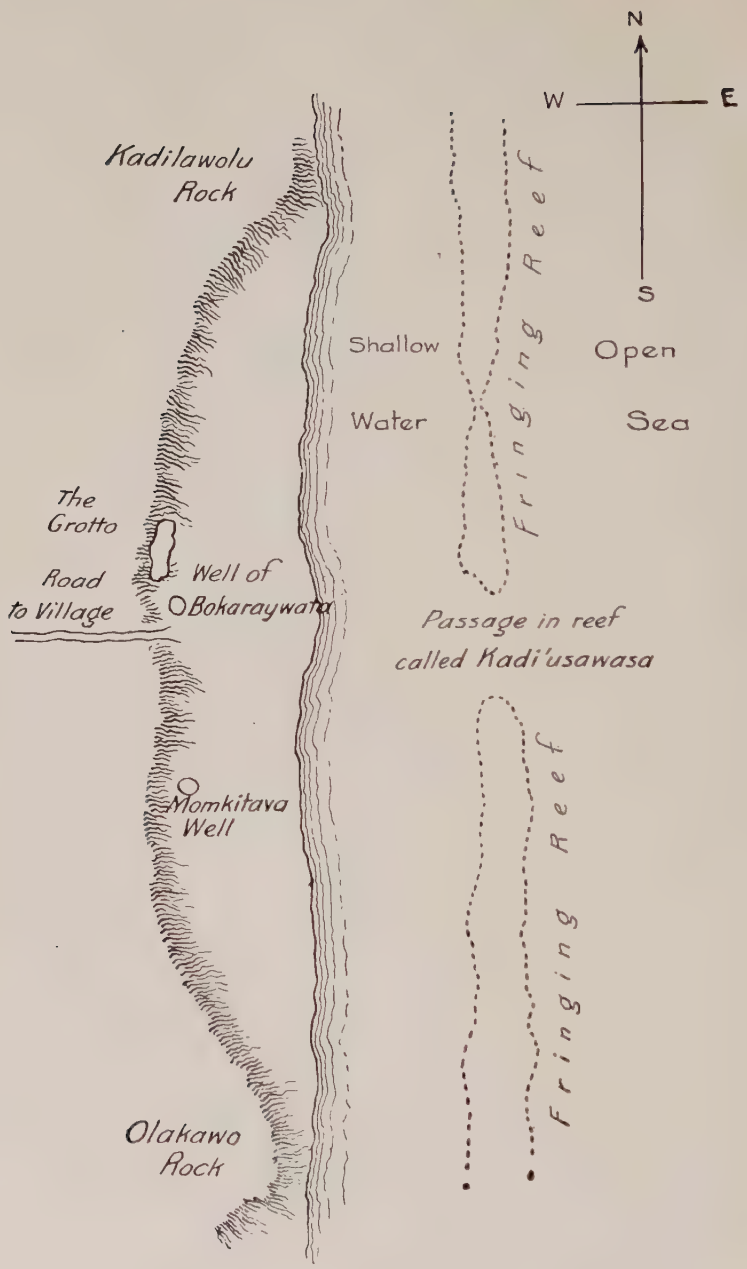


FIG. 4.—THE BEACH OF KUMILABWAGA

receives dramatic piquancy from the part played by the mother. Had she gone into the house herself and brought water to her daughter, the tragedy would never have occurred. She, the very source of the matrilineal kinship bond, she from whose womb the two children sprang, she is also the involuntary cause of the tragedy. It is interesting to note that here, as in most mythological and legendary incidents, the man remains passive and the woman is the aggressor. We find analogies to this in the stories about Kaytalugi, in the behaviour of the women during the Yausa, and in the reception given by female spirits to newcomers in the next world. Eve also gives the apple to Adam, and Isolde holds out the drink to Tristan.

The description of the actual fall is given in clear but somewhat sober terms. To the natives, however, who know well the beautiful setting of open sea, steep white coral cliffs festooned with tropical foliage, and the dark, mysterious grotto hidden among old overhanging trees, this part of the narrative means more than is contained in the mere words. The myth speaks to them in terms of a familiar landscape and of many love experiences which have taken place in just such surroundings.

The narrative lacks, as usual, any explicit allusion to the psychology of the actors. I was able to obtain the following commentary: (58) "The man saw her: she had no skirt on; he was frightened, he ran: the woman chased him. (59) But then the desire was born inside him; it upset his mind, and they copulated." And again: (61) "Already his passion was kindled inside; he desired her with his whole body; (62) they copulated; they ca-

ressed, they erotically scratched each other." Thus when the man found himself pursued, he succumbed to passion and then he felt the pangs of love as strongly as did his sister.

The description of the pursuit and fall will be more easily understood with the help of the sketch (Fig. IV), in which the main topographical features of the beach are shown. The brother bathes in the narrow canoe passage facing the centre of the beach. On seeing his sister approach naked, he makes for the shore and then runs along the water-line from one of the enclosing rocks to the other. After the fall, they move to the grotto, and there remain until their sad and romantic death. On this map are also indicated the two wells of which we shall hear presently.

After the two have copulated, they remain, consumed by passion, and yet bowed down with shame, until death ends their love and brings them freedom. (63) "They did not eat anything, they did not drink at all, since they had no desire. Shame has come over them, because they have committed incest, brother with sister." The motive of love and death is juxtaposed here, crudely and clumsily, and yet as dramatically as native language and imagination permit. The picture of the two enlaced in death with the symbol of love, the aromatic mint, springing from their bodies is full of primitive beauty.

With the death of the lovers the real drama comes to an end, and what follows has only a dogmatic and didactic connection with the first act. But the somewhat pedantic account of the adventures and doings of the man from Iwa—above all, of how he learnt the magic and how he

laid down the rules for its practice, is of great sociological interest, because the pragmatic value of myth and its normative importance for native belief and behaviour are largely contained therein.

Who the man of Iwa was, whether of the same clan as the brother and sister, whether their friend or a magician, none of my informants could say: and unfortunately I was not able to discuss the matter with anyone from the island of Iwa itself.

Why the frigate-birds enter into the myth also remains somewhat mysterious, for they are not associated with the Malasi clan or with love-making. I was told: (64) "They go where they smell human beings." With regard to the somewhat cryptic insistence (verse 33) of the Iwa man to obtain the spell or charm (called in the text *wosi*, "song," and not by the usual word *yopa*, "spell"), I was told by my informant that there is a magic of coco-nut oil somewhat different from the one performed while the oil is being boiled out of the coco-nut. This spell is not indispensable to the system of love magic, and it must not be confused with that chanted over the aromatic herbs boiled in the already made coco-nut oil. This spell will be found in the next section, in verses 65 and 66. I have already indicated in the narrative that the last verses of the myth (from 40 on) should be taken as addressed to the community of Kumilabwaga and not to that of Iwa; and that this inconsistency was probably due to my narrator's clumsy way of telling the tale. He was perfectly well aware, when questioned, that the details as to what people in Kumilabwaga should do were of no great im-

portance on the distant island of Iwa. But he was not prepared to change his narrative in any way.

It may be noted that, in these days, Iwa is far more famous for love magic than the parent community, and that the myth still tries to claim certain ancient rites of the magic for Kumilabwaga, to which it belongs. In the last paragraph we have incidentally a description of certain elements essential in this magic; we learn that it is associated in a mystic and mythological manner with the passage in the fringing reef, with the sea-water of the beach and with the wells upon it. In fact, bathing in the surf on that shore improves the personal appearance. (69) "In the reef passage of Kadi'usawasa, we, the male and female youth of Kumilabwaga, bathe and our countenances clear up and become beautiful." A similar effect is produced by bathing in the two wells of brackish water which lie at the foot of the cliffs, under the grotto of Bokaraywata. But here there is a division of sexes. (70) "Bokaraywata is the man's water; the woman's water is called Momkitava. (71) Should we (boys) drink of that (that is, the woman's water) our hair would become grey." In fact, if either sex bathe in the other's pool or drink the water, their looks will be impaired.

The story of the two small fish (verses 46-48) is not quite clear, and the comment which I received from my informant was practically a repetition of his original statement, and does not make it any more intelligible (see below, verses 72 and 73 in the native text).

An interesting point in the last few verses of the myth is the insistence on the economic side of the transaction in love magic. It is a further example of the natives' interest in repayment and reciprocity. It must be noted, however, that it has more than a merely economic importance; it symbolizes also the prestige of the community as masters in magic, and is rather a tribute to their importance, than a mere reward for services rendered. A careful comparison of the free rendering with the word-for-word translation given below the native text will show that certain commentaries have been implicitly introduced into the former. I cannot enter into a justification of every one of such implicit comments, for this would lead to too elaborate linguistic discussion.

2

THE ORIGINAL TEXT OF THE MYTH

(1) *U'ula wala Kumilabwaga.* (2)
Base just Kumilabwaga.

Le'une latula, tayta vivila, tayta
She quicken with child, one woman, one

ta'u. (3) *Imwa, itata'i doba*
man. She come, she cut fibre skirt

inasi; isulusulu ka'i matauna. (4)
mother their; he cook leaves this man.

Isulubuyala makwoyne kwoywaga.
He cook coco-nut oil this kwoywaga leaves.

(5) *Isouya, ila matauna ikakaya.* (6)
He hang, he go this man he bathe.

Imaga luleta, iwota ka'i,
She come however sister his, she break wood,

itaya, inasi ilukwo:
she dumps, mother their she tell:

"Kuwoki kala sopi luguta."
"Thou bring there his water brother mine."

(7) *Ikaybiga: "Kuwoki, wala boge*
She speak: "Thou bring there, just already

ikanaki kaydawaga kaykegu."
it lie at trimming board leg mine."

(8) *Isuvi minana vivila, ikanamwo*
She come out this woman, it lie here

sopi; iwori kulula, ibusi bulami,
water; it flick hair her, it drop coco-nut oil,

ibwika kulula, ivagi yamala, iwaysa,
it drop on hair her, she do arm her, she wipe,

isukwani. (9) *Boge iwoye, boge layla*
she smell. Already it strike, already it went

olopoula, ivagi nanola. (10) *Ila*
in inside her, it do mind her. She go

ikasopi, imaye, iseyeli. (11)
she get water, she bring, she put down.

Ikatupwo'i inala: "Mtage luguta?"
She ask mother her: "Indeed brother mine?"

Kawalaga: "O latugwa boge
Speech her: "O children mine already

inagowasi! *Boge* *layla* *waluma."*
they are mad! Already he went in open sea."
(12) *Ivabusi,* *ilokeya* *waluma.* (13)
She come out, she go to in open sea.
Ivabusi *okadu'u'ula,* *ilikwo* *dabela,*
She come out end of road, she untie fibre skirt her,
iseyemwo. (14) *Ivayayri* *namwadu,*
she put down it. She follow the shore naked,
ila *Bokaraywata.* (15) *Iloki* *luleta,*
she go to Bokaraywata. She go to brother her,
ikakaya *Kadi'usawasa.* (16) *Ikikakaya,*
he bathe Kadi'usawasa. He bathe,
ivabusi, *layla,* *ibokavili.* (17) *Ibokavili,*
she come out, he went, she chase. She chase,
ila'o *o* *Kadilawolu* *papapa;* *itoyewo,*
she make go to Kadilawolu rock; he reverse,
ila. (18) *Ibokavili,* *ila* *Olakawo,*
he go. She chase, he go to Olakawo,
itoyewo, *ikaymala.* (19) *Ikaymala,*
he reverse, he bring back. He bring back,
ila *o* *Kadi'usawasa,* *iyousi,* *ikanarise*
he go in Kadi'usawasa, she take hold, they lie down
wala *obwarita.* (20) *Ikanukwenusi,* *ikammaynagwasi,*
just in sea. They lie, they go to shore,
ivino'asi *imwoynasi,* *ilousi* *Bokaraywata*
they finish they climb, they go to Bokaraywata
o *dubwadebula* *ikenusi.* (21) *Ikanukwenusi,*
in grotto they lie. They remain lying,

imasisisi. (22) *Gala ikamkwamsi, gala imomomsi,*
they sleep. No they eat, no they drink,
u'ula ikarigasi.
reason they die.

(23) *Aybogi kirisalaga iloki*
Night time magical effect it approach
guma'Iwa; imimi kirisala kasi
inhabitant of Iwa; he dream magical effect their
sulumwoya. (24) *"O! gumimi, tayyu*
mint plant. "O! my dream, two people
tomwota, kasitayyu lūleta, nanogu
humans, they two together sister his, mind mine
odubwadebula Bokaraywata ikenusi." (25)
in grotto Bokaraywata they lie."

Iwola Galeya, i'ulawola; Kitava, ikota
He paddle Galeya, he paddle; on Kitava, he anchor
waga, ine'i, inenei —gala.
canoe, he search, he go on searching —no.

(26) *Iwola Da'uya, ima*
He paddle Da'uya, he come here
Kumilabwaga, i'ulawola, italaguwa,
Kumilabwaga, he paddle on, he disembark,
iginaga mauna, dauta deli
he see however bird, frigate-bird together with
sala ikokwoylubayse.
comrades his they soar.

(27) *Imwa, imwoyna, ila, igise,*
He come here, he climb, he go, he see,

ikatuvili, igise, boge ikarigeyavisi. (28)
he overturn, he see, already they die.
U! laysusinaga sulumwoya ovatikosi;
Lo! he sprouted however mint-plant in chest theirs;
isisu, ikanukwenusi, ivayariga. (29)
he sit, they lie, he skirt shore however.
Inene'i keda, ine'i ibani, ikammaynagwa
He search road, he search he find, he go to
o valu. (30) *Ikasobusi, minana isisu*
in village. He drop out, this woman she sit
itata'i doba; ikaybiga: "Avaka okwadewo?"
she cut fibre skirt; he speak: "What in sea-shore?"
"Latugwa aylosi, ikaytasi, ivagi
"Children mine they went, they copulate, he do
kasi mwasila." (31) *Ilivala, ikaybiga:*
their shame." He say, he speak:
"Kuma, kukwa'u megwa, alaga."
"Thou come here, thou recite magic, I hear."
(32) *Ikawo, ikikawo, ilaga, isisawo,*
She recites, she re-recites, he hear, he learn,
ivina'u, isawo; isisawo, ivinaku,
he finish, he learn; he learn thoroughly, he finish,
imwo, imuri, kaysisula. (33) *Imimuri,*
he come here, he shift, seat his. He shift then,
igigse iwokwo, ikaybiga: "Kuneta
he see it finish, he speak: "Coco-nut cream
kakariwosila?" (34) *Ikatupowi, ilivala,*
magical song his?" He ask, he say,

matauna *guma'Iwa:* *"Wosila*
this man inhabitant of Iwa: "Song his
kuma *kulivala!"*
thou come here thou say!"

(35) *Ilivala* *boge* *ivinakwo,* *ikaybiga:*
She say already she finish, he speak:
"Bukusisu, *balaga;* *kayu'ula*
"Thou might sit, I might go however; magic herb base
Kayla-kawa *bukuseyemwo,*
magic herb of Kawa thou might put here,
matala *bala'o* *Kayro'iwa."*
eye his I might carry magic herb of Iwa."

(36) *Ivabusi,* *iwoki* *makayna*
He drop out, he approach there this
sulumwoya, *boge* *laysusina,* *itoto*
mint-plant, already he sprout, he stand
ovitakosi, *ku'igunigu.* (37)
in chest their, mint plant (special variety).
Ikituni, *idigika* *waga,* *iwola,* *ila'o*
He break off, he load at canoe, he paddle, he carry
Kitava. (38) *I'ulawola,* *italaguwa* *Kitava.*
Kitava. He paddle on, he disembark Kitava.
iwaywosi; *iulawola,* *italaguwa* *Iwa.*
he rest; he paddle, he disembark Iwa.

(39) *Kawala:* *"Matala* *Kayro'iwa*
Speech his: "Eye his magical herb of Iwa
lamaye, *u'ula* *Kayla-kawa*
I brought here, base magic herb of Kawa

ikanawo *Kumilabwaga.* (40) *Sopila*
he lie there Kumilabwaga. Water his
Bokaraywata, karikedala Kadi'usawasa; silasila
Bokaraywata, passage his Kadi'usawasa; silasila plant
itomwo, *givagavela* *itomwo.*
it stand here, givagavela plant it stand here.
(41) *Kidama taytala bimayse* *odumdom,*
Supposing one man they might come in lagoon,
ikakayasi, boge bibuyavi. (42) *Bomala*
they bathe, already he might bleed. Taboo his
sisopi— *bimayse,* *gudi'ova'u,*
their water— they might come, new boys,
bikikakayasi. (43) *Kidama bikola*
they might bathe. Supposing he might entangle
yena, gala bikamsi; *ikola,* *ikatunisi*
fish, no they might eat; he entangle, they nick
yeyuna, *bikamsi* *numwaya,* *tomwaya.*
tail, they might eat old woman, old man.
(44) *Luya* *ikatupisawo* *uwatala,*
Coco-nut he wash up by sea one pair,
bikamsi *kwaytanidesi* *bomala,* *gala*
they might eat one only taboo his, no
bikamsi; *numwaya, tomaya bikamsi.*
they might eat; old women, old men they might eat.
(45) *Sopila* *Bokaraywata* *kidama*
Water his Bokaraywata supposing
bimayse *ikakayasi,* *bilousi*
they might come here they bathe, they might go

orokaywoyne; iyenisi, imegwasi. (46)
up above; they scoop out, they charm.
Igauga bimimisi yena;
Later on however they might dream fish;
imimimisi, ipelasi; bilousi,
they dream indeed, they jump; they might go,
ikanawoyse makwoyna sopi. (47) *Kabulula*
they lie there this water. Nose
natana, kabulula naywela, bikakayasi.
one, nose second, they might bathe.
Kidamaga natanidesi bilisasayse,
Supposing however one only they might fling out,
bila obwarita. (48) *Kidama nayyu,*
he might go in sea. Supposing two,
tayta vivila, tayta ta'u, bikakaysi,
one woman, one man, they might bathe,
aywayse ovalu, vivila biyousise,
they go in village, woman they might grasp,
bimasisisi. (49) *Imasisisi, ibubulise,*
they might sleep. They sleep, they stir up,
vayva'i; iva'isi, boge aywokwo
relations-in-law; they marry, already it was over
bisimwoyse, ibagulasi.
they might remain, they garden.
(50) *Imaga taytala gudiva'u,*
He come here however one new boy,
kalubuwami, vaygu'a. (51)
magical payment your, objects of high value.

Imayayse, *iseyemwasi* *vaygu'a*
They bring here, they lay down here vaygu'a
bukuyopwo'isiga. (52) *Isika'i,*
you might charm however. Isika'i leaves,
kasina, *kaykakaya,* *ripuripu,*
kasina leaves, kaykakaya leaves, ripuripu leaves,
kaywori *bukumegwasi,* *memetu*
kaywori leaves you might charm, obsidian blade
bukumegwasi, *luya* *bukumegwasi,*
you might charm, coco-nut you might charm,
silasila *bukumegwasi,* *buresi*
silasila leaves you might charm, buresi leaves
bukumegwasi, *kwoysanu*
you might charm, coco-nut husk fibre
bukumegwasi, *gimgwam* *bukumegwasi,*
you might charm, gimgwam leaves you might charm,
yototu *bukumegwasi,* *sinata* *bukumegwasi,*
yototu leaves you might charm, comb you might charm,
bilagwayse.
they should pay.

(53) *Vayla* *mimegwa* *sebuwala;*
For your magic payment for magic;
bilousi *ikamsi* *kasi* *bulukwa,* *kasi,*
they might go they eat their pig, their food,
kasi *lalava,* *kasi* *samaku,* *kasi*
their ripe betel-nuts, their yellow betel-nuts, their
kayla'usi, *kasi* *toutetila,* *kasi*
ripe bananas, their ripe sugar cane, their

woderi— *bikamsi.* (54) *Bogwaga*
yam (variety)— they eat. Already however
aymayase *vaygu'a,* *kaulo,* *bu'a—*
they brought vaygu'a, yam food, areca-nut—
lukukwamsi. (55) *Tolimegwa* *yokwami,*
you eat. Masters of magic you,
mtage *bukusakayse,* *kusimwoyse,*
indeed you might give, you sit here,
bilawoysaga— *bukusimwoysaga,*
they might carry however— you might sit here however,
tolimegwa *yokwami—* *u'ula.*
masters of magic yourselves— base.

THE INFORMANT'S COMMENTARY

I obtained the following elaborations of the narrative. The number of the sentence referred to is given at the beginning of each commentary.

See 2. Commenting on the relative ages of the two children:

(56) *Kuluta* *ta'u,* *isekeli* *vivila.*
Eldest child man, she follow woman.

Their names are not known. They belonged to the Malasi clan.

(57) *Kugis,* *Malasi* *ivayva'isi*
Thou see, Malasi they marry
vesiya: *taytala* *Wawela,*
maternal kinswomen theirs: one man Wawela,

Bigayuwo— *Nabwayera;*
Bigayuwo (name of man)— Nabwayera (name of his wife);

tayta *Vakuta;* *tayta* *Kitava,*
one man Vakuta; one man Kitava,

Pwaygasi— *Bosilasila.*
Pwaygasi (name of man)— Bosilasila (name of his wife).

See 16.—The behaviour of brother and sister immediately preceding the consummation of incest is thus explained:

(58) *Ta'u igisi: gala dabela, ikokola,*
Man he see: no fibre skirt hers, he fear,
isakauli; minana vivila ibokavili. (59) *Iga'u,*
he run; this woman she chase. Later on,
boge itubwo lopoula matauna, ikaytasi.
already it upset inside his this man, they copulate.

See 14-21.—The diagram (Fig. 4, p. 547) showing the topography will make the account of the pursuit clearer.

See 19.

(60) *Ikanarise wala obwarita.*
They lie down just in sea.

Questioned about the meaning of this expression, the informant affirmed that they first committed the act of incest in the water. In going over the story he described the passion in more detail.

(61) *Boge kala la'iya ivagi olopoula,*
Already his passion it do in inside his,

magila *kumaydona* *wowola.* (62) *Boge*
desire his all body his. Already

ikaytasi, *ikininise,*
they copulate, they scratch lightly,

ikimalise.
they erotically scratch.

See 22.—Explaining why the two lovers remained without food and drink and so died, my informant says:

(63) *Gala* *sitana* *ikamkwamsi,* *imomomsi,* *pela*
No one bit they eat, they drink, for

gala *magisi,* *boge* *ivagi* *simwasila,* *pela*
no desire theirs, already it do their shame, for

luleta *ikaytasi.*
brother her sister his they copulate.

See 26.—Explaining the behaviour of the frigate-birds:

(64) *Ikokwoylubayse—* *ilousi,* *isukonisi* *mayna*
They soar— they go, they smell odour

tomwota.
humans.

See 33.—This, the spell or chant, designated *wosi* (song) and not *megwa* or *yopa* (spell) is sung whilst they boil coco-nut oil for love magic. It runs:

(65) *Mekaru* *karuwagu;* *mevira,*
Gall bladder, gall bladder mine; woman,

viregu; *meboma,* *bomatu.*
woman mine; North-west wind, North-west wind.

(66) *Ipela* *karuwagu* *mevira,*
He change place gall bladder mine woman,
viregu; *meboma,* *bomatu,*
woman mine; North-west wind, North-west wind,
medara, dara.
languor, languor.

The rite is not performed in a strong wind:

(67) *Kidama* *sene* *bipeulo*
Supposing very much it might be strong
yagila, *gala* *tavagi* *megwa—* *tage*
wind, no we magic— so that not
biyuvisa'u. (68) *Iga'u* *niwayluwa,*
he might blow away. Later on calm weather,
batavagi *ola'odila,* *tamiga'i*
we might do in bush, we might charm
kwoywaga *ka'ukwa'u.* *Kwayavi,* *bibogi*
kwoywaga plant morning. Evening, at night
boge *tasayki* *vivila.*
already we give woman.

See 40.—The water in the Kadi'usawasa reef-passage has some magical properties, as bathing in it improves the looks.

(69) *Okarikeda* *Kadi'usawasa* *gwadi* *yakida*
In passage of Kadi'usawasa child ourselves
takakaya *bitarise* *migida.*
we bathe he might beautify face ours.

About the brackish wells we are told:

(70) *Ta'ula* *lasopi* *Bokaraywata;* *vivila*
Man his water of Bokaraywata; woman
Momkitava. (71) *Kidama* *tamomsi* *bayse* *sopi,*
Momkitava. Supposing we drink this water,
boge *takasouso'u.*
already we become grey-headed.

In general, if persons of either six bathed in the other's well, their looks would become impaired.

The *silsila* and *givagavela* plants, mentioned in the text (verse 40), grow near the wells.

In olden days people from other villages, even from the neighbouring villages on the lagoon (Sinaketa and others) were not allowed to bathe in these waters.

See 46.—Questioned about the fish, my informant says:

(72) *Imiga'ise,* *imimise* *yena* *nayiyu*
They charm, they dream fish two
naketoki *sikum* *nayyu*
small animals sikum (name of fish) two
kabulula *kabulula.* (73) *Natanidesi,* *talisala*
nose to nose. Only one, we fling away
bila *obwarita,* *gala* *takakaya.*
he might go in the sea, no we bathe.

See 49.—This verse means that such magic would lead not only to love but to matrimony:

(74) *Bilivala* *veyola*
He might speak maternal kinsman his
vivila: *kawala:* *"Kuwokeya* *kuva'isi,*
woman: speech his: "Thou bring there you marry.
ummwala *boge."*
thy husband already."

3

CASES OF ACTUAL INCEST

Let us now pass from legend to reality, and see how events of the present day tally with their prototypes in the dim past. It has already transpired that, in spite of the seemingly absolute taboo, in spite of a real and overwhelming abhorrence felt by the natives, cases of brother-and-sister incest do yet actually occur. Nor are they an innovation due to European contact—an influence for which the natives blame so many changes in custom. Far back, before white men appeared in the island, such lapses from tribal morality happened, and they are remembered and quoted to-day, with names and details.

One of the previous paramount chiefs, Purayasi, was known to have lived with his sister; and another one, Numakala, is also strongly suspected by history of this felony. They, of course, belonged to the Malasi clan; and there can be no doubt that with them, as with so many other dynasties and famous rulers, the feeling of power, of being above the law, served as a shield from the usual penalties. And, as historical figures, they and their

doings would not so easily lapse into oblivion as in the case of commoners. I was told by my informants that, in olden times, discovery of incest would invariably have meant death for both culprits, self-inflicted in the usual form of suicide. This would at least have been the case when commoners were concerned. But, say the natives, with the influx of missionaries and government officials all custom has deteriorated, and even the worst crime can be brazened out.

That a man may still pay the supreme penalty for breach of the incest taboo, has been proved to me by the following instance which came directly under my observation. I had not been in Omarakana more than a couple of weeks when one morning, in July, 1915, I was casually told by my interpreter and only informant (at that time I still worked in pidgin English) that, in the neighbouring village of Wakayluwa, a boy named Kima'i had fallen off a tree and killed himself—by accident. I was also informed that somehow, again by accident, another boy had received a severe wound. The coincidence seemed to me strange at the time, but unable to speak the language and thus gain the full confidence of the natives, I was still groping in the dark; and being much occupied with the customs of mourning and burial, then new to me, I gave up all attempt at getting to the bottom of the tragedy.

Later on, I strongly suspected that the falling off the tree was a case of suicide by *lo'u*, but the natives remained reticent on the subject. For there is nothing more difficult for an ethnographer than to find out the ins and outs

of really important and tragic events of recent date, which, if they came under the notice of the local resident magistrate, might lead to court proceedings, imprisonments and other serious disturbances of tribal life. And in this case, as I learned afterwards, there was some political element involved, since Kima'i was a relative of Moliasi, the traditional enemy of the paramount chief, and the incident had revived the historical tension between the ruler of Kiriwina and that of Tilataula.[1]

It was only during my last visit to the Trobriands, when almost three years had elapsed since the tragedy, that I found out the bare outline of the case. Kima'i had an intrigue with his mother's sister's daughter. This was no secret, but, though the villagers generally disapproved, it was only by the initiative of the girl's betrothed that matters were brought to a head. After several attempts to separate them, his rival insulted Kima'i in public, telling aloud, or rather shouting across the village, the plain fact that he was a breaker of the incest taboo, and mentioning the name of the girl with whom the incest was committed. This, as we know, is the most aggravated form of the insult, and it produced the desired effect. Kima'i committed suicide. The youth who brought about this was, in fact, wounded by the kinsmen of Kima'i; hence the strange coincidence of the two casualties occurring at the same time. The girl is now married and lives happily with her husband. She can be seen on the frontispiece made from a photograph taken during mortuary proceed-

[1] For an account of the political conditions among the Trobriand natives, cf. Seligman's *Melanesians* and the present writer's *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*, ch. ii, sec. v, and *Myth*, ch. ii.

ings, at which she wears no mourning (black paint and shaven hair) since she was a real kinswoman of the deceased (see above, ch. vi, sec. 2). The whole occurrence gave me some insight into the legal ideas of the natives, but with this subject I have dealt elsewhere.[1] Here it is mainly the sexual aspect which interests us and to this we will return.

For not all the cases of incest—even in its more reprehensible form—lead to the same tragic issue. There is no doubt that, at present, several couples are under strong suspicion of being guilty of the most heinous form of *suvasova*, that is, of incestuous intercourse between brother and sister. One case given to me in detail is that of a pretty girl, Bokaylola, who is said to allow her albino brother to "visit" her. I had a feeling from the way in which my informant spoke about it that the concurrence of two immoralities somehow mitigated both. It is felt that, since an albino has no chance whatever of a woman and since he is not really a man, incest with him is not so offensive.

By far the most instructive and clear case of brother-and-sister incest, is the notorious liaison between two Malasi people of the village of Okopukopu.

Mokadayu was still very much alive when I visited the Archipelago, and he gave me the impression of a man of unusual ability and intelligence. Endowed with a beautiful voice and famous as a singer, he also for a time exercised the lucrative profession of a spiritistic medium. In this he arrived independently at some of the great

[1] *Crime and Custom*, pp. 77 sq.

achievements in which our modern spiritism excels; such as the production of ectoplasm and phenomena of materialization (usually of worthless objects); but his specialty was rather dematerialization (invariably of valuable objects). He would conjure up an arm and a hand —belonging presumably to his "control"—and this was always ready to foreclose on valuables, food, betel-nut, or tobacco, which, no doubt, were transported to the spirit world. Obeying the universal law of occult phenomena, Mokadayu's "controls" and other spirit friends would operate only in the dark. The famous hand from the other world could only be dimly seen, clutching at every piece of worldly goods within its reach.

There are arrogant and inconsiderate sceptics, however, even in the Trobriands and, one day, a young chief from the north caught hold of the hand and dragged out Mokadayu himself from the shelf where he lay concealed behind a mat. After this, unbelievers tried to belittle and even to denounce spiritism, but the faithful still brought gifts and payments to Mokadayu.

On the whole, however, he found it better to devote himself to love and music, for in the Trobriands, as with us, a tenor or baritone is sure of success with women. As the natives put it: "The throat is a long passage like the *wila* (cunnus) and the two attract each other. A man who has a beautiful voice will like women very much and they will like him." Mokadayu, indeed, used to sleep with the chief's wives, for he preferred married women, who are at a premium in the Trobriands. Finally, after having tasted, no doubt, the minor degrees of *suvasova*

(clan incest), he came to what was to be the most dramatic exploit of his life.

His sister, Inuvediri, was one of the most beautiful girls in the village. Naturally she had many lovers; but a strange change came over her, and she seemed disinclined to sleep with her lemans. The young men of the village were dropped one after another. They put their heads together and decided to find out what had happened to their mistress, suspecting that she must have acquired a new and paramount lover, who was satisfying all her desires. One night they noticed that brother and sister had withdrawn to the parental house. Their suspicions were confirmed: they saw a terrible thing: brother and sister making love to each other. A serious scandal followed; for the news spread all over the village and brother and sister were made aware that everybody knew of their mutual crime. The story goes that the two lived in incest for some months after this discovery, so passionately were they enamoured of one another, but Mokadayu had finally to leave the community. The girl married a man from another village. I was told that, in olden days, both would unquestionably have committed suicide.

Such is the story of Mokadayu and his sister. Together with other facts previously described, it shows dramatically how inadequate is the postulate of "slavish subservience to custom." It also shows that the opposite view—that native principles are a sham and a fake—would equally be misleading. The fact is that the natives, while professing tribal taboos and moral principles,

have also to obey their natural passions and inclinations, and that their practice is the compromise between rule and impulse, a compromise common to all humanity.

The myth of incest, at first sight mysterious and incomprehensible, loses a great deal of its strangeness when we have found that it reflects certain tendencies which can be seen manifested in real life. The temptation to incest evidently does exist in the mind of the natives, though by a powerful taboo it is prevented from finding ready expression.

It is interesting to note how the myth is used to justify the cases of real incest which happen nowadays. For instance, a clansman of Mokadayu tried to explain and to extenuate the latter's crime against tribal morality as follows. He told how Mokadayu had prepared coco-nut oil impregnated with love magic, in order to induce an amorous response in another girl; how Invediri, entering the house, inadvertently spilt some of the fluid and became intoxicated by the magic; how she discarded her fibre skirt and lay naked on the bedstead, longingly awaiting the brother. How, on entering the hut, and seeing her nakedness—perhaps also feeling the influence of magic on himself—he became inflamed with passion. This paraphrase, or rather copy, of the myth was definitely put to me as a defence of the criminal; it was intended to show that it was fatality rather than fault which had brought about the abominable act. The myth was thus used as a paradigm by which actuality was explained, in order to make the deed more comprehensible and acceptable to the na-

tives. The psychology manifested in this use of the myth makes the function of the myth itself clearer to the sociologist.

Far from being incompatible with the powerful incidence of the taboo, the temptation to incest is probably strengthened by it through the irresistible fascination which forbidden fruit always had, has, and will have for the human being. How far psycho-analysis can help us to solve this problem and where it merely confuses the issues, I have tried to discuss in a previous work.[1] Here I would like only to repeat that, by correlating the Myth of Incest with the realities of life, by placing it side by side with typical dreams of the natives, with their obscene language, and with their attitude towards taboo in general, we find a satisfactory explanation of its apparent strangeness in terms of fact and not of hypothesis.

[1] *Sex and Repression.*

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